

OVERDALE INFANT SCHOOL

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

Rationale

Overdale Infant School is a teaching and learning establishment. The quality of teaching and learning is at the heart of school improvement. The quality of teaching is judged in terms of its impact on pupils' learning.

Purpose

- to raise standards
- to provide a continuity and consistency of approach to teaching and learning at Overdale Infant School
- to provide a common understanding of good practice.
- to provide a clear focus for monitoring classroom effectiveness.

Guidelines

- At Overdale Infant School effective, good quality teaching is characterised by : *(not in any priority)*
 - enthusiasm, fun and enjoyment.
 - good knowledge and understanding of the subject being taught.
 - a well organised and managed classroom.
 - appropriate use of good quality resources, including human.
 - use of a variety of teaching styles and strategies appropriate to the children and subject taught.
 - regular brain breaks.
 - explicit teaching of clear objectives which are shared with the children.
 - good relationships within the classrooms.
 - high standards of behaviour with positive behaviour management strategies.
 - good questioning skills which assess pupils' knowledge and challenge their thinking.
 - high expectations which are shared with the children.
 - lessons taught at an appropriate pace.
 - well prepared and planned lessons with appropriate success criteria

- flexibility.
 - a stimulating, interactive environment with well established routines.
 - a range of formative and summative assessment techniques which inform future planning.
 - differentiated but challenging tasks to match children's abilities.
 - positive encouragement.
 - building on prior knowledge and providing opportunities throughout the lesson to recap and reinforce.
 - Progress made by all learners
 - All children will have access to the same opportunities, irrespective of gender, age, race or ability in the development of their learning. They will have equal access to resources.
- At Overdale Infant School effective learning is characterised by learners :
 - who feel happy, healthy and secure and who enjoy learning.
 - who are challenged and extended.
 - who are actively engaged.
 - who ask questions.
 - who are able to explain and evaluate their learning.
 - who have a positive attitude to work, high self esteem and motivation.
 - who can work independently and collaboratively.
 - who understand what to do and what is expected of them.
 - who can apply their knowledge in other situations.
 - who can select and use appropriate resources.
 - who are confident and can take risks, and know how to tackle difficulties.
 - who can stay on task and work at an appropriate pace.
 - who know what their next step should be in order to make good progress
 - Criteria for learning are encapsulated in the question - *"to what extent are the pupils engaged? challenged? extended? progressing?"*
 - and for teaching - *"are pupils taught the appropriate skills using effective strategies at the right pace?"*

Teaching Styles and Strategies

Children react differently to styles of teaching, and therefore need to experience varied teaching approaches. Below is a list (though not exhaustive) of some of the strategies used at Overdale Infant School :

- questioning
- investigation
- explanation
- discussion
- opportunities for creativity
- instruction
- demonstration / modelling
- a practical curriculum
- whole class teaching
- group teaching
- individual teaching
- pupil initiated learning
- learning partners
- peer support
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Learning Styles

A variety of learning styles will assist children to become more effective and independent learners. Different children learn best through either a visual, auditory or kinaesthetic approach which include the following

- questioning
- problem solving
- investigating
- observing
- predicting
- listening
- discussing
- role play
- practising
- recording
- evaluating
- collaborating

Eventually most children should be able to cope with a balance of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic approaches.

Resources

- Good classroom organisation of appropriate resources and materials is a factor associated with high standards of achievement.
- Resources need to match pupils' abilities and meet their needs.
- Information Technology is a vital resource in a school and provides opportunities for all children to be actively involved in their learning.
- The library is used by staff and children, and provides a central reference resource.
- Other adults (T.A.) used effectively are a valuable resource.

Planning

- At Overdale Infant School teachers plan collaboratively. The more that teachers work together in appropriate teams, the more that a shared understanding emerges about the complexity of teaching and learning with the aim of consistent improvement and the raising of pupil achievement.
- Planning provides continuity and progression and the curriculum is planned
 - in the long term - i.e. annually
 - medium term - i.e. termly or half-termly
 - short term - i.e. weekly / daily
- Planning across the school is driven by the needs of children and is guided closely by Government directives and initiatives.

Use of Assessment

- The Assessment of pupils' achievement and progress provides information about a child's strengths or difficulties and is used to inform future planning.
- The School sets the children individual targets in Literacy and Numeracy which are shared with parents at parents evenings.
- Year Group targets are set and agreed with the Governors
- SATs are completed during the Summer Term by all pupils in Year 2.
- Foundation Stage Profile is completed throughout the year of the Foundation Stage, i.e. Reception Class and reported to parents/LA in June
- Teacher Assessments are ongoing, records kept, and the information shared with parents, next teachers and the Headteacher.
- Pupils' work is marked in line with the Marking Policy.

Expectations

- Everyone working and learning in school has higher expectations
- High expectations challenge children and deepen their knowledge and understanding.

Environment

- Children learn best when children feel safe and secure and are in a stimulating learning environment, which is well organised and interactive.
- All staff consider the children's safety, well-being and emotional development to be of paramount importance.
- The School promotes high standards of behaviour and attitude towards learning.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Teaching and Learning is monitored through lesson observations by the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team.
- Peer observations are integral to raising standards also.
- Curriculum co-ordinators observe lessons in order to evaluate progression of their subject across the School.
- All pupils have equal access to Teaching and Learning. (See Equal Opportunities Policy, Racial Equality Policy, Gifted and Talented Policy, Special Educational needs Policy).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- All staff members are entitled to CPD. Each year, CPD is driven by the SEF and SDP
- School Improvement is most surely and thoroughly achieved when :
 - teachers engage in frequent, continuous and honest discussions about teaching practice building up a shared vision as to what learning should "look like".
 - teachers plan, design, evaluate and prepare lessons together in teams across the school.
 - All staff are driven to provide consistently outstanding teaching across our school
 - We welcome innovation, imagination and creativity.
 - We have an open, honest culture of learning whereby everyone is encouraged to "have a go".

"There is a striking quality to fine classrooms. Pupils are caught up in learning; excitement abounds; and playfulness and seriousness blend easily because the purposes are clear, the goals sensible, and an unmistakable feeling of well-being prevails. A-list teachers achieve these qualities by knowing both their subject matter and their pupils; by guiding the learning with deft control - a control that itself is born out of perception, intuition and creative impulse."

(Lou Rubin)