



St Just Primary School
October 2015
Teaching & Learning Policy

The aim of this policy is to ensure a whole school approach to teaching and learning and to demonstrate our shared ethos on teaching and learning. It will reflect our whole school aim to raise standards, particularly in reading, writing and maths, and to further improve our standards of progress from EYFS to KS1 to KS2.

Our philosophy on teaching and learning can be described through the following statements, which we endeavour to adhere to in all teaching and learning sessions – formal and informal, outdoor and indoor, in school and out of school, individual, group or whole class....

We aim to:

Set high expectations and give every learner confidence that they can succeed

- demonstrate a commitment to every learner's success; make them feel included, valued and secure.
- raise learners' aspirations and the effort they put into learning, engaging, where appropriate and possible, the active support of parents or carers.

Establish what learners already know and build on it

- set clear and appropriate learning goals, explain them and make every learning experience count.
- create secure foundations for subsequent learning.
- identify gaps in learning and address them through providing appropriate intervention.

Structure and pace the learning experience to make it challenging and enjoyable

- use teaching methods that reflect the material to be learned, match the maturity of the learners and their learning preferences and ensure 100% time on task.
- eradicate passivity of learners through stimulating and creative content, teaching methods and the deployment of staff, resources and technology.
- make creative use of the range of learning opportunities available, with and beyond the classroom including ICT.
- match the curriculum and learning targets to learner needs
- have a strong focus on speaking and listening, comprehending and interpreting
- track pupil progress regularly and thoroughly, analyse attainment and achievement and act upon its outcomes

Inspire learning through passion for the curriculum content

- bring the subject alive and ensure good teacher subject knowledge
- make it relevant to learners' wider goals and concerns.

Make individuals active partners in their learning

- avoidance and disengagement will not be tolerated
- build respectful teacher-learner relationships that take learners' views and experience fully into account, as well as data on their performance.
- use assessment for learning to help learners assess their work, reflect on how they learn and inform subsequent planning and practice.

Develop learning skills and personal qualities

- develop the ability to think systematically, manage information, learn from others and help others learn
- develop confidence, self-discipline and an understanding of the learning process.

Implement rigorous Performance Management

- Challenge under-performance in teaching and in the support of teaching and learning
- Model good practice and share it across the school and into the wider community
- Set targets which will move the individual and the school forward
- Be confident in trialling new ideas which are based on sound evaluation and review of our unique context

Making the most of each teaching session.

Our practice incorporates and weaves AfL strategies into each teaching and learning session and lessons which are at least 'Good' will incorporate some or all of the following:

Avoid the verb 'to do'; replace it with the verb 'to learn'.
Use the word '**learning**' to describe all tasks, skills, activities etc...

Recap the last related lesson's outcomes or focus. *Questioning with no hands up and talk partners serves to gather key points and involve all children*

Directly introduce the **learning objective or skill** for that session. Link to the bigger picture of the unit coverage so children understand the place of today's learning within the context of the whole unit.

Display or refer to the **WHAT?, HOW? WHY?**AND REFER TO IT AT INTERVALS DURING THE LESSON (Not necessarily in this format.) *What are we learning today ? How are we going to learn it ? What are we bothering to learn that ?*

Exploit the use of **Success Criteria** with learners. **Set task** and ask **children to summarise the success criteria** (i.e. key points to remember). **Write these up or at least ensure you have explicitly explained them.** *Use to identify goals, assess progress and develop independence during lessons. They may also be success criteria for aspects of learning, e.g. working with others.*

Explore **children's ideas** about new focus. *Question and observe in order to formatively assess children's current understanding and to adapt teaching to meet children's needs.*

Model and teach using and building on children's ideas. *Children's feedback - individually, in pairs or in groups – gives indications of their understanding, which shape next steps in learning and teaching.*

Regularly feedback to individuals or focus group, asking open questions and enabling children to reveal and develop understanding. *Stop the lesson at intervals or give them a time limit for working. Make an example of those meeting the SC and show what they are doing to meet it.*

Children can **identify success against learning objectives** and then **identify a part to be improved or developed.** *Self assessment or peer discussion might come into play here.*

Children can **reflect on successful learning** and **learning in need of development and improvement**, using **success criteria** as a guide.

Plenary. Overall learning in the lesson is discussed. *Children can self-evaluate about successes, reflect on progress made, and improvements needed; this could also be teacher-led through use of the class visualiser enabling the whole class to understand what 'success' looks like. Focused questioning may be needed to elicit who needs additional help.*

Visualisers can also be used at the beginning of the learning session or at intervals to example a meeting of the SC or to point out where improvement can be made.

Exploit the learning environment:

- Display children's work to show it is valued – it doesn't have to be their best, neatest etc... just their own!
- Display self-help strategies, prompts and mnemonics around the room
- Display resources, tools and self-help apparatus – don't hide it away ! Remind them what there is 'to hand'!
- Talk less; enable more, be a facilitator of learning, challenge and build in strategies to encourage independence!
- Use yourself and the adults in your room to model good learning – we all need to continue learning.
- Display next steps/targets for children to use and understand and to be referred to in class by staff.

ASSESSMENT of learning:

Questioning

Assess children's **starting points** by questioning and adapt learning and teaching activities appropriately. *Before, during and after a lesson .*

- Use questioning to move the lesson on – whilst giving time to think, don't allow 'waiting for an answer' to slow the learning pace down for others.
- Don't accept the first answer.
- Keep the answering and questioning on task.
- Prepare / use focus questions for focus children.
- Use a range of higher and lower order questioning techniques.
- e.g. What other examples are there?
 - What is the evidence for parts or features of.....?
 - How could we add to, improve, design, solve?
 - What do you think about...? What are your criteria for assessing?
- Use thinking time and talk partners to ensure all children are engaged in answering questions.
- Use a range of techniques in order to get EVERYONE involved, and contributing to, learning.

Observing

- **Watch and listen** to children's discussions to assess learning as it is happening.
- Make **planned observations** of particular children or focus groups to support their learning.
- Deploy LSAs to observe and monitor with Learning Objective sheets

Discussing

- Have **brief impromptu discussions** during the lessons with children to follow up any surprises at their responses or behaviour during the lesson.
- Use discussions to assess understanding, to diagnose reasons for misunderstandings or misconceptions and resolve difficulties within a lesson.
- Change the course of the lesson to meet and rectify misunderstandings – it's too late at the end of the session!

- Use informed discussions to follow up earlier assessment and diagnosis and to discuss progress, targets and any peer or self assessments to inform next steps in learning.

Analysing and feedback – feedback must impact on improvement to be of any value !

(Feedback has most impact when given verbally with the child alongside the teacher. Written feedback, completed away from the child has little if any impact. We may risk the misinterpretation from external inspectors, that work has not been ‘marked’ simply because it does not have a written comment after it. We can avoid this by initialling in books when feedback has been given or by using verbal feedback stampers.)

- Mark and assess written work *with* children, wherever possible, to identify any common errors or misconceptions and to guide children on how to improve and progress.
- Discuss *with* the children their responses to the tasks to identify and correct any errors and misconceptions, to assess their achievement against the learning objectives, to monitor their progress and to share with them how they can improve and what to do next.
- Time for this should be included in planning in order to become part of the ‘*assess, plan, teach, assess*’ cycle.
- A flexible strategy for marking should reflect the needs of our younger pupils and those with learning difficulties. Verbal feedback is preferential to written feedback and has more impact for most children. Written feedback records the advice given and when.
- Staff should indicate they have spoken to a pupil during a lesson by using the ‘verbal feedback’ stamp. This may be accompanied by a brief note of what was discussed and initials may be used to clearly show which member of staff gave the feedback.
- Where appropriate it will be highlighted in the book whether a task was undertaken independently, guided or supported.
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How to ensure that feedback has impact on learning:

“Assessment that encourages learning fosters motivation by emphasising progress and achievement rather than failure. Comparison with others who have been more successful is unlikely to motivate learners. It can also lead to their withdrawing from the learning process in areas where they have been made to feel they are ‘no good’.

- Ensure that children understand that the purpose of marking is not to find out what is “right” or “wrong” but is to enable teachers to identify gaps in learning, so that we can plan learning to fill those gaps.
- Plan in time for children to **respond** to marking.
- Make sure marking system is easily understandable.
- Give children **time and opportunities to improve their work** in light of marking.
- Give specific feedback:- information and guidance to plan next steps in their learning and links to targets.
- Pinpoint strengths and advise on how to develop them
- Be clear and constructive about weaknesses and how to address them.

See our policy on Marking and Feedback.

Appendices to this policy will be the guidelines for each individual subject.