

Elmsett C. of E. V.C.P. School

Teaching, Learning & Assessment Policy



Adopted by the Governing Body at the full committee meeting held on

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Signed:

Terry Smyth, Chair of Governors

Elmsett C. of E. V.C.P. School

Teaching, Learning & Assessment Policy



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INTRODUCTION

Learning and teaching is at the heart of Elmsett Primary School. We aim to develop a love for learning within a creative new curriculum where every individual is valued for his/her unique contribution. We wish to provide pupils with the knowledge and skills needed to become critical thinkers, ready to embrace local and global challenges. Learning in our school is a collaborative process between adults and children; between school and home. Assessment for learning lies at the heart of this process.

The aim of the Elmsett's Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy is to make explicit the shared and agreed principles and practices upon which teaching, learning and assessment are based at our school across all areas of learning.

This policy has been formulated and taken into consideration the Ofsted criteria of January 2014.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

At Elmsett we recognise that learning is a continuous process which involves acquiring knowledge, skills and concepts, and developing positive and worthwhile attitudes. We strive for Quality First Teaching at all times to promote active learning.

Quality First Teaching:

- helps children to recognise and value their achievements and successes
- builds on what learners already know
- builds secure foundations for subsequent learning
- makes learning exciting and real
- makes learning an enjoyable and challenging experience
- develops the full range of learning skills across the curriculum
- actively involves children in their learning.

Effective teaching and learning takes place in an environment in which:

- relationships provide a confident and positive atmosphere
- it is stimulating, purposeful and where children's work is valued and displayed appropriately
- a culture of self-evaluation prevails
- there is room for reflection
- learning is valued
- there is mutual respect between all members of the school learning community
- no-one is afraid of making mistakes
- lessons are well-paced; teachers vary pace to match the task and children's needs
- support from home is encouraged Teachers and other adults at Elmsett:

- actively promote independent learning
- encourage children to be responsible for their own learning, their environment, themselves and others around them
- ensure learning objectives address the needs of all children
- ensure the behaviour of all children allows learning to take place
- equip children with the ability to transfer knowledge and skills
- have the flexibility to embrace and explore unexpected responses without losing sight of the intended learning outcome
- are not afraid to go beyond the objective, to better respond to children's learning
- make explicit reference to the learning that is taking place
- recognise that children learn in different ways (visual, auditory, kinesthetic)
- set learning in a meaningful context and exploit links between subjects
- use skilful questioning
- have high expectations

PLANNING

Long-term planning and curriculum framework

Our planning ensures effective, efficient and creative delivery of the National Curriculum and the Practice Guidance for Early Years Foundation Stage. Long-term plans have been designed to encompass a range of subjects and the development of skills. Teachers produce half termly plans for their year groups. Each term the key topics are shared with parents. Subject progression is mapped throughout the school.

Our plans ensure:

- knowledge, skills and concepts are developed systematically from year to year
- best use is made of links between subjects
- effective links enable children to apply the knowledge and skills learnt in one subject to others
- there is a greater coherence to learning by the bringing together of complementary aspects of subjects in a thematic approach
- links between subjects are relevant and not contrived
- We recognise that some aspects of the National Curriculum and Primary National Strategy have to be taught outside the linked curriculum map.

Medium-term and short-term planning

Our medium-term plans set out the work to be covered in one half-term or term. These have been developed from a variety of sources including:

- The National Curriculum and Primary Framework
- The Practice Guidance for Early Years Foundation Stage
- Science Scheme of Work
- PSHE Programme
- Core Learning Skills
- Published schemes of work eg. Music Express
- Relevant Intervention Programmes
- SEAL programme

Short-term plans set out work to be covered in a week or lesson.

Effective short term planning:

- ensures plans have clear learning objectives outlining potential steps to success
- recognises the range of needs and abilities within the class
- takes into account IEPs (SEN), PEPs (LAC) and G & T needs
- takes into account a range of teaching styles to reflect children's different learning styles
- takes into account previous learning
- plans in assessment activities including self, peer, teacher and TA
- plans are adapted in light of daily pupil achievement
- identifies opportunities to embed ICT
- identifies related homework activities
- highlights resources required

Teachers will differentiate the curriculum by:

- task
- resources
- outcome
- adult support

SHARING LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SUCCESS CRITERIA

The sharing of learning objectives or intentions is a crucial element in the process of teaching and learning. By sharing the objective, we empower children to take ownership of their learning.

We ensure:

- learning objectives of a lesson are clear, and explained in words children understand

- children understand the purpose of their learning ('The Big Picture')
- task instructions are clearly separated from the learning objective
- there are clear success criteria, which are discussed and agreed between the children and their teacher
- learning objectives and success criteria are visually displayed where appropriate and referred to, except in those lessons where they are to be 'discovered'
- learning objectives provide the focus for the teacher to evaluate to what extent the lesson met its aims
- learning objectives provide the focus for self/peer evaluation (and marking)

Learning objectives often begin with:

To know (knowledge: factual information)

To be able to (skills: using knowledge and resources)

To understand (concepts: understanding reasons, causes and effects, how things work) To

be aware of (attitude: empathy, awareness of issues)

The purpose of the success criteria is to enable teachers and children to be sure about how to judge whether or not the learning objectives have been met. If the learning objective is seen as the 'house', then the steps to success are the 'bricks' used to build the house.

Success criteria are often phrased:

'What I am/you are looking for is'

'How will I/you know you have....'

'What will I/you see....'

'I/you will know you have been successful if....'

'Remember to....'

'Can you....'

'Top tips....'

Success criteria are shared, discussed and agreed with pupils. They are appropriately differentiated to ensure all pupils can make progress towards the learning objective. These are used as a basis for the evaluation of the lesson by the teacher and children. This forms part of key questioning and plenaries.

EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING

We recognise that skilful and well-planned questions are crucial to effective teaching, learning and assessment. Our questions focus children's thinking on the key points. Teachers and other adults model good questioning to help and encourage children to ask

their own questions and to further or clarify their learning and understanding. Effective questions can help to move children from the concrete and factual towards the analytical and evaluative.

Questions can help children to:

- consolidate their learning
- explore ideas further
- make connections
- create new understandings
- make links to the 'big picture'
- reflect on their learning
- think

There are two main types of questions:

- closed questions: these imply that the teacher has a predetermined 'correct' answer in mind, and are a useful means of making on the spot assessments
- open questions: allow for a range of answers and can encourage children to think beyond the literal
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It is important that we support children in responding to questions:

- allowing 'thinking-time' after each question ensures children have time to think through their response
- giving children the opportunity to discuss their ideas briefly with another child or adult ('talk partners' or 'talk trios') can help them to rehearse their responses, and to feel more confident and prepared; we encourage children to 'think, pair, share'
- by teachers using a range of signs or signals to gather children's responses
- by encouraging children to provide evidence for their views or opinions
- using pre-tutoring when appropriate to familiarise children with lesson content

Children are taught how to respond to other children's replies sensitively in order to build consensus or to expose a range of opinions or possible viewpoints.

Effective questions are those that:

- start with a narrow focus and broaden out; recall first, then encourage fresh thinking (or)
- start with a broad focus and narrow down to detail
- signal that participation is valued
- stimulate and sustain continuing interest in a topic

- help children externalise and ‘rehearse’ their knowledge by putting it into words
- are differentiated, targeting children of all abilities; engaging all children in the learning
- allow children time to think, reflect and gather their ideas before answering
- are varied in style
- encourage children to take risks; exploring and sharing their ideas in a non-threatening way

ASSESSMENT

Assessment can take many forms and can be used for different purposes. It is embedded in teaching and learning and is an essential part of this. Effective assessment for learning happens all the time in the classroom and involves:

- promoting trusting relationships
- valuing attitudes to learning
- encouraging and building self-esteem
- sharing learning objectives or intentions with children
- helping children know and recognise the standards they are at now and those they are aiming for providing feedback that helps children to identify how to improve; recognising their next steps and how to take them
- believing that every child can improve in comparison with previous achievement
- both teachers and children reviewing and reflecting on performance and progress
- children learning self-assessment techniques to discover areas they need to improve

We acknowledge that there are two main types of assessment which fulfil important yet different roles.

Formative assessment – assessment for learning – is an active and ongoing process in the classroom between the teacher and the child. It is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there. We recognise that the following areas are all part of assessment for learning:

- clarifying learning objectives or intentions – at the planning stage
- sharing learning objectives with pupils when teaching
- involving children in self-evaluation against the learning objectives pupils are aware of the success criteria used to judge their learning outcomes
- focusing oral and written feedback around the learning objectives of the lesson
- using appropriate questioning during the lesson

- raising children's self esteem through the use of positive language and through the celebration of achievement
- using data to effectively gauge the progress of individuals and groups and to inform target setting
- organising target setting so that children's achievement is based on prior attainment as well as aiming for the next level up

One of the key elements in formative assessment is the written or oral feedback which teachers give the children about their work.

Summative assessment – assessment of learning – is the means by which the progress of children is monitored. This includes end of unit tests and teacher assessments, optional tests as well as statutory end of key stage assessments.

Examples of effective comments used when providing feedback

We ensure our comments:

link to the learning objective, include what the child has done well and what could be improved e.g.

- I like the way you have...
- Well done for...
- You have understood.... Remember to...
- Next time...
- Target:
- Top Tip:
- EBI: Even better if ... sometimes provide a question to further children's understanding of the learning objective;
- encourage children to self-evaluate e.g. What have you learnt?
- include symbols, stamps, faces with different expressions e.g. smiley or sad;
- give examples of what we mean e.g. Remember to use powerful verbs like ...

Peer and Self-assessment

We recognise that children will achieve more if they are fully engaged with their own learning process. We encourage children to actively assess their own learning, determining for themselves whenever possible what they need to learn and why. Time is built in for pupils to reflect upon their own work and set targets. Children are involved in the discussion and agreement of success criteria. They are guided within plenary sessions to evaluate their progress towards a learning objective using the steps to success.

Children are encouraged to ask themselves the following questions:

- Am I learning in the best way for me?

- What are my strengths and weaknesses?
- What do I need to do to improve?
- How am I going to make an improvement?
- What is really making me think?
- How will I know if my work is good?
- Do I know what to do if I am stuck?
- Can I identify what I have to learn?
- What can I remember and understand?

The following strategies can be used for peer and self-assessment:

Smiley faces



– I don't understand



– I'm nearly there



- I understand

Thumbs up / Thumbs down



This is used at any point during a lesson to ascertain understanding or feelings.

Talk/Response Partners



Children share with a partner:

- something new they have learnt
- what they found easy/difficult
- something they would like to learn in the future
- what has been done well
- what needs to be done to improve

MARKING AND FEEDBACK STRATEGIES

We interpret the concept of 'MARKING' in terms of the feedback we give to children about their work. This feedback may take a number of forms - oral, written, formal and informal - and may be given on a group-basis as well as an individual one.

In order to assist our children to achieve their full potential in all areas of the curriculum, we believe that 'marking' must be positive, clear and appropriate to the purpose, productive in its outcomes and child centred.

Marking work provides us with a vehicle by which we can understand and evaluate each child's developmental needs. We see it as a celebration of the child's own achievements as well as a method of guidance and identifying areas for development.

We consider 'marking' to be an integral part of good classroom practice. It plays a fundamental role in the cycle of:-

planning - teaching+learning - evaluating+assessing - planning.

We believe that 'marking' should focus on the Learning Objective or personal target which has been identified and shared with the child. Children need to be aware of what has to be learnt so the feedback given is directed and relevant.

MARKING STATEMENT:

The principles behind our marking policy are as follows:

- Marking should be fair and consistently applied by all staff including newly appointed members to the team, support staff and supply staff.
- A range of marking strategies should be used including peer and self assessment.
- Opportunities should be provided for children to respond to marking.
- LOs should be clearly identified and displayed so that specific feedback can take place. These objectives should be presented in language appropriate to the age of the children.

- Where appropriate 'Success criteria' should be displayed. These need to be clearly visible so that the children can use them to support their work . They may be accompanied by an explanatory statement (e.g. This is what we need to do) depending on the age and ability of the children. KS1 and KS2 use a pictorial success criteria .
- Ideas for displaying success criteria include; on IWB, stickers, individual copies from board stuck into books etc.
- Children, where possible, need to be involved in generating the Steps to Success.
- In core subjects Year 6 teachers often use green pen to show when the children have been successful and pink pen to show an area for development.
- Marking can act as evidence of attainment if set against Learning Objectives or criteria derived from programmes of study, National Curriculum or otherwise. (See marking Policy)

TARGET SETTING

In addition to the end of key stage targets which are formally set and reviewed in the Autumn Term, we set targets as part of our ongoing school monitoring and evaluation cycle.

These may include:

- Numerical targets in Reading, Writing and Maths for every child in each cohort, set and reviewed each year using Pupil Asset. These targets are monitored throughout the year to check children are 'on track'. Cohort Pupil Progress Meetings take place with the Headteacher half - termly to discuss targets and progress.
- Curriculum targets for the whole school are set in Literacy and Maths. These are then layered for each year group and for groups within a year if appropriate. Curricular targets are set and reviewed termly based on prior attainment. They are informed and identified by analysis of pupils' work, discussions with pupils, teacher assessment and test performance. Planning is adjusted accordingly to meet these targets. There are strong links between curricular targets and the School Development Plan and Performance Management targets.
- Short-term targets set as part of the marking/feedback process. A range of age-appropriate systems are used to record and review individual targets, including Individual Target Bugs
- Individual targets are shared with parents through the Pupil Information pack.

We are aware of the need to keep the target setting process both manageable and constructive for both children and teachers. We acknowledge that it is an integral part of our practice and supports, encourages and challenges pupils. We encourage children to take increasing responsibility for targets and to judge their own progress towards achieving them.

TRACKING

Pupil Asset is used throughout the school to track pupil progress from one year to the next. This monitors the progress of different cohorts year on year in line with National

Expectations and it monitors progress in line with previous attainment at key points eg. Foundation and end of Key Stage 1.

These systems enable us to:

- track pupils' progress towards expected or targeted attainment
- identify pupils who are falling below their expected attainment in order to modify their learning and enable them to get back on track and consider their SEN status
- identify pupils who are exceeding their expected attainment in order to adjust the curriculum, to meet their needs or revise their targets and consider if they are G & T
- identify if there is variation in the performance of different groups of pupils e.g. gender differences, ethnicity, looked after children, etc
- identify variations in performance in different subjects.

REPORTING TO PARENTS

Parents are invited to attend consultation meetings in the Autumn and Spring Terms at which staff discuss progress and targets for individual children. In the Summer Term parents receive a written report on their child's progress during the academic year. This includes targets for improvement. Year 2 and Year 6 parents receive their child's National Curriculum end of key stage assessments. There is also an opportunity for parents to discuss this report with the class teacher should they wish. Foundation Stage parents receive the Foundation Stage Profile scores.

MONITORING OF TEACHING AND LEARNING / SELF-EVALUATION

We have an ongoing, whole school approach to the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning.

The focus for monitoring is also derived from identified school priorities in the SDP and draws on the following:

- direct observation of teaching
- scrutiny of pupils' work
- scrutiny of planning
- teachers' self-evaluation
- discussion with staff
- discussion with children
- discussion with stakeholders
- analysis of assessment results
- analysis of evidence from IEPs / Provision Mapping / PEPs

- targets set at performance management
- governor visits and their reports

The key aim of this monitoring is to learn from good practice. It helps us to identify our strengths, recognise when improvements need to be made and inform us of the next steps to move forward.

Evidence from monitoring feeds into:

- School Development Plan
- School Self-Evaluation discussions
- Raising Attainment Plan
- Subject Action Plans
- CPD Planning
- Classroom observations
- Performance Management
- Reports to the Governing Body

The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is carried out at all levels within the school from the Strategic and Leadership Teams to subject leaders, class teachers as well as from members of the Governing Body.

INCLUSION

We aim to be a fully inclusive school community and to involve all members of the school community in decision-making and policy development. We regard staff, parents and children as undertaking a joint enterprise to make learning exciting and positive for everyone. We are all members of a team working co-operatively to this end. Our aim is to provide the best possible learning experiences for all; this includes giving necessary support to individuals or groups of pupils who require something extra to meet their needs

We aim to promote development in all elements of the child's personal, academic, social, emotional and physical wellbeing.

CONCLUSION

This policy for Teaching, Learning and Assessment reflects the consensus of the whole teaching staff, and has the full agreement of the Governing Body. The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all the teaching staff and the Headteacher. Teachers are to make all teaching assistants, supply teachers, pupils and parent helpers within the classroom aware of this policy.