



TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

RATIONALE

This policy is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies of teaching and learning at Milecastle Primary School. It lays the foundation for the whole curriculum, recognising that at the heart of good learning is effective teaching within any subject context.

AIMS

The aim of this policy is to establish an agreed range of practice which will support, maintain and continue to improve the quality of learning experiences and standards of achievement in the classroom by:

- establishing an agreed range of practice and common understanding in respect to teaching and learning.
- supporting teachers in identifying good practice.
- enabling staff to reflect objectively on aspects of personal practice which they wish to develop or receive support.
- providing a focus for monitoring and evaluating effectiveness.
- identifying focus points for appraisal of performance and staff development.

PRINCIPLES

We believe that:

- teaching and learning is the central purpose of the school.
- teaching should aim to maximise the learning of all pupils
- all our pupils have the capacity to learn.
- teachers are learners, too.

GUIDELINES

KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

1. THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The learning environment should positively support learning in all areas of a child's development and should be organised so that:

- opportunities are available for learners to realistically demonstrate independence, choices and decisions.
- learners can take increasing responsibility for the organisation and care of learning resources.
- available space and learning resources are used to the best advantage for learning.
- learners take increasing responsibility for classroom display and care of the learning environment.
- learners have the opportunity to implement agreed ground rules and work effectively in both group work and as an individual.
- pupils learn to maximise the use of ICT as an aid to learning.

2. PUPILS' LEARNING

Learners should have opportunities to:

- have first hand experiences and engage in investigative work.
- select their own learning materials and tools appropriate to the task.
- communicate their findings in a variety of ways.
- work as individuals and as a member of co-operative groups.
- learn to work collaboratively - taking turns, sharing materials, listening and respecting the views of others.
- produce and present work for a variety of audiences.
- learn the basic skills of numeracy and literacy.
- practise and apply new skills and knowledge.
- use technology as an aid to learning.
- make the best progress possible.
- work to deadlines.

3. TEACHERS

In keeping with school aims, as managers of teaching and learning, teachers should:

- value every pupil.
- be clear about the skills, knowledge, concepts and attitudes that are at the heart of the learning process.
- be aware of different learning styles and plan for different abilities.
- plan effectively and monitor pupil progress.
- use a range of questioning techniques, especially questioning which will encourage pupils to think, reason and reflect.
- ensure that expectations are high and design challenging and differentiated learning for all abilities.

- be clear about the skills and knowledge to be taught and ensure that there are clear learning objectives relating to the success of these.
- manage time effectively and ensure that lessons have appropriate structure and pace.
- assess and record regularly and consistently with school requirements.
- value and promote partnership between home and school.
- provide opportunities, where appropriate, for pupils to be involved in their own learning targets, encouraging them to become independent learners.
- form positive relationships as part of a team to ensure consistency of approach.
- value the monitoring process and the opportunities this provides for dialogue and professional development.

EFFECTIVE LESSONS

In effective lessons pupils are:

- clear about what they are doing and why.
- learning i.e. making progress in skills/knowledge/understanding.
- actively involved in their learning.
- interested and enjoying their work.
- on task for a high proportion of the time.
- aware of and demonstrate the behaviour expected of them.
- interacting with the teacher and others as and when appropriate.
- using resources appropriately.
- work well either independently, cooperatively or collaboratively.

In effective lessons teachers:

- have clear learning objectives and criteria for success which are shared clearly with the pupils.
- have appropriate but high expectations which challenge pupils' thinking.
- motivate the pupils.
- create a positive learning atmosphere in which effort and success are recognised and praised.
- give constructive and useful feedback.
- differentiate to allow all pupils the opportunity to achieve the learning goals.
- build on previous learning.
- constantly refocus and reinforce learning goals and success criteria.
- assess learning.
- manage pupil behaviour to maximise learning.
- ensure a good learning pace and efficient use of time.
- are secure with the subject knowledge relevant to the lesson.

Pupils' work should reflect:

- an appropriate level of demand, quality and progress over a period of time given their age and previous attainment.
- a range of experiences and methods of recording.
- balance between consolidation, practice and more demanding thinking.
- care and pride in their work.
- marking which is helpful, identifying errors where appropriate and giving constructive advice towards further improvements or targets (see Marking Policy).

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

Observation followed by feedback is a valuable way of recognising and developing the work done by teachers. It is also a learning process in itself. It is part of professional dialogue to support reflection and develop effective practice.

The observer can:

- learn new things to support their own ideas.
- see how other staff go about their work and reflect on their own work.
- give a second opinion.
- confirm what is effective.

The observed teacher will:

- have the benefit of a second "pair of eyes".
- get feedback from someone who understands the job and knows the school.
- get pointers for development and improvement.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN OBSERVING A LESSON

EFFECTIVE TEACHING FEATURES:

- high expectations (amount of work, concentration and behaviour).
- clear learning objectives.
- well structured lesson (pacy beginning, middle which sustains motivation, clear plenary).
- a high proportion of direct teaching (questioning, explaining, demonstrating which reaches all pupils).

- use of appropriate technical vocabulary (correct terminology, notation, symbols etc.)
- class well organised (pupils able to practise what they know).
- variety of activity (balance between whole class/group/individual teaching).
- group work well organised.
- efficient pace and timing (an overall brisk pace but with time for pupils to think through answers).
- manageable degree of differentiation (aiming to secure good progress in class as a whole).
- effective provision and use of resources.
- good subject knowledge.
- use of assessment (the way the teacher questions and feeds back to pupils' work and responses).
- evidence that assessment is used to inform future work and learning.
- homework is a planned part of the learning programme.

Pupils' response

- attentiveness, concentration, perseverance, enthusiasm, confidence.
- a high degree of participation (willing contributions, thoughtful responses, on task).
- explanation of their methods and thinking (willing to share solutions, thoughts and ideas with others).
- prepared to tackle problems (can work in a variety of ways to achieve goals).
- interested in subject content.
- can recall previous learning.
- use resources well and with respect.
- presentation of recorded work is organised and clear.
- behave well and co-operate with each other.
- show respect for others whether answers are correct or not.
- pupils learn from their mistakes and use their targets to help improve.

CONCLUSION

Through the application of this policy we aim to ensure that effective teaching and learning are central to the whole curriculum.

POLICY IMPLEMENTED:

POLICY REVIEWED: