SENNEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

'IMPROVING TEACHING AND LEARNING' POLICY

INTRODUCTION

At Sennen School we believe in teaching as learning and aim to recognise and develop the full potential of all individuals by working together in a happy, secure and stimulating learning environment which inspires self-confidence and respect for others.

We also seek to create sustained improvement in standards by giving people the satisfaction of performing their role more effectively whilst maintaining an acceptable work/life balance for their wellbeing through the provision of 10% Planning, Preparation and Assessment time (PPA) for class teachers and opportunity for dedicated Leadership and Management time, where necessary.

CONTEXT

In order to be effective, and prepare children for the 21st century, we recognise that:

- The knowledge base in society is increasing rapidly
- More effective learners are required in a society increasingly organised around the processing of information
- Increasing adaptability is required in a changing society
- People need to learn in a wider range of contexts
- Individuals have preferred learning styles

For these reasons we believe that the process of acquiring learning and thinking skills is becoming increasingly important both within and across the content of the Primary curriculum.

AIMS

This policy aims to:

- Balance the promotion of 'life-long learning' with the emotional well-being of both the staff and children
- Establish an agreed range of good practice in respect of teaching and learning
- Enable all staff to identify aspects of practice they wish to develop and in which they would welcome support
- Improve the quality of learning experiences offered to pupils
- Provide an agreed focus for monitoring and developing teaching and learning
- Enable all staff to learn from each other by observing and sharing good practice both within and between schools.

NEEDS

This policy seeks to:

- Promote equal opportunities
- Promote inclusion
- Meet the needs of pupils more effectively by varying the approach to teaching and learning, and the use of resources, to take account of differing needs / learning styles (see also SEN / Assessment policies)
- Meet the needs of all staff by offering development opportunities aimed at the extension of teaching / learning support repertoires
- Meet the need to retain the best features of educational practice and research when seeking to implement both the school curriculum and extra-curricular activities

AGREED CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE TEACHING & LEARNING

In order to implement this policy successfully the staff have agreed that the following characteristics need to be referred to when planning all teaching / learning activities:

The Learning Environment should –

- Promote both positive attitudes to learning and increasing independence
- Foster co-operative and collaborative learning and well disciplined working relationships
- Set a standard of quality which provides pupils with high expectations and positive attitudes
- Value individual differences and respect the contributions of all persons
- Be self-servicing – to enable pupils to take increasing responsibility for the organisation and care of the learning resources
- Use available space and learning resources to best advantage
- Have the necessary resources for learning which are effectively stored and accessible
- Have interactive and stimulating displays
- Have displays of every child's work throughout the year to celebrate achievement, with an appropriate balance according to year groups and gender
- Be cared for by the pupils themselves
- Be governed by an agreed set of rules for all activities
- Provide regular opportunities for pupils to develop their ideas through independent inquiry, including extension/consolidation activities and homework
- Enable pupils to use ICT effectively as an aid to learning

Such that Pupil's Learning can:

- Involve quality interaction with both the teacher, teaching assistants and other visitors/helpers
- Be facilitated through the provision of activities accommodating a variety of learning styles
- Offer planned and sequential opportunities to work individually, and as a member of a co-operative group
- Enable them to have first hand experience and engage in investigative work
- Enable them to communicate their findings in a variety of ways and produce work for a variety of audiences
- Offer practice and application of knowledge/skills/concepts gained
- Enable them to play an increasing role in planning and organising their learning
- Involve the selection of appropriate materials and tools
- Involve the sequential acquisition of basic study skills
- Involve time limits and support in working under pressure of time
- Use modern technology as an aid to learning
- Be planned according to the outcomes of both summative and formative assessment on a regular basis (APP / AfL)

With Adults who :

- Are committed to continuing professional development (CPD), the revised Teacher Standards and agreed shared expectations through annual performance management/staff appraisal
- Value and have high expectations of every pupil irrespective of ability, race, gender age or achievement
- Maintain good discipline through mutual respect
- Are flexible by using different teaching styles based on the task and the needs of the children
- Are aware of the model of learning he/she presents to pupils
- Have good curriculum knowledge and are clear on the skills, concepts and attitudes which are the goals of the learning process
- Engage in well timed interventions and deploy effective higher-order questioning techniques
- Have clear lesson objectives which are passed on to the pupils
- Are able to assess children's learning within a lesson and devise/utilise assessment strategies related to agreed school policies, maintaining effective records of their plans and outcomes
- Systematically engage in focussed teaching
- Design challenging and differentiated learning tasks using stimulating resources both for individual activities and collaborative group work
- Should be aware of the time devoted to individual pupils
- Value and promote partnership between home and school
- Form positive relationships as part of a team
- Demonstrate that they value the care, commitment and contribution of all the staff and helpers in differing teams

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

- The improvement of teaching and learning is recognised as an on-going process which will be monitored by both the Head, governors and teachers. Cover will be made available each term (within budget/staffing constraints) to enable staff interaction, professional dialogue and classroom observation followed by opportunity for constructive feedback and reflection – within an agreed whole-school area of focus linked to the SIPDP School Improvement and Partnership Development Plan

- Particular aspects of curriculum planning, tracking progress and target-setting for both individuals and groups of children will be monitored according to the school's subject specific and assessment policies. Standards will be monitored through the analysis of comparative data annually by the Headteacher and the governors Standards sub-committee.

- Evaluation and review will similarly be a collective on-going process involving the interpretation of evidence from both self-evaluation and external sources (eg OFSTED, RAISEonline and County Data Profile) by both staff and governors .

NEXT STEPS

The staff have agreed:

- That high standards in Literacy and Numeracy are our number one curriculum priority within a broad and balanced curriculum and that a collective approach to the leadership & management of these areas will be developed.
- That assessment, moderation and target-setting processes should be reviewed and developed further in 2013/14
- To identify individual needs and provide well focussed interventions in order to accelerate progress and 'narrow the gap'
- That further sources and methods of collection of evidence for self-evaluation should be investigated, aiming to increase both the awareness and input of all stakeholders – for example:
    - how children's views are being actively sought (pupil forums, school council, pupil conferencing)
    - staff 'trailing' pupils and their experience within school
    - using teaching assistants to monitor children's responses
    - how parent's views are sought and acted upon
    - focussed, regular governor involvement
    - work sampling across classes/year groups (eg Learning Wall, whole school topics, collective work scrutinies)