



*ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL*

# *Teaching and Learning Policy*

2017

---

## Aims and Purposes

Any attempt to raise standards in our school must be focused on learning in the classroom and the wider environment. Continued and sustained improvement is dependent upon improving the quality of teaching and learning that is taking place on a daily basis.

## We expect every teacher to be a good teacher – no child deserves less.

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School the expectation is that all pupils are provided with high quality learning experiences that lead to consistently high levels of pupil achievement.

By adopting a whole school approach to teaching and learning throughout the school, we aim:

- to provide consistency of high quality teaching and learning across our school.
- to enable teachers to teach as effectively as possible.
- to enable children to learn as efficiently as possible.
- to give children the skills they require to become effective lifelong learners
- to provide an inclusive education for all children.
- to learn from each other, through the adoption of a collaborative, consistent approach to teaching and learning, where good practice is shared.

There is no single recipe for improving teaching and learning in a school. However this policy outlines some of the **key elements** which are essential to raising standards in teaching and learning. It also sets out a **broad structure** for lessons, based on best practice and research linked to how we best learn.

When reading this policy it is important to remember that adopting a broad template for structuring lessons does not preclude:

## Lesson structure

All lessons in our school should follow a basic structure made up of four parts.

- **Phase One - Overview; set the scene, place learning in a wider context, link to prior learning; review previous lesson; provide the 'big picture', share learning objectives/ebi's and success criteria.**
- **Phase Two - Teaching; Pupils receive new Information; instruction/exposition.**
- **Phase Three - Learning; Pupils process the information; processing/understanding.**
- **Phase Four - Plenary; Review information.**

Precise interpretation of the four phase structure will inevitably be very different in different situations. Age, ability, timing of the lesson, subject area and the particular focus for the lesson will all have a significant impact.

Teachers may well scroll through the phases more than once during the lesson. For example, after a short period of exposition, pupils may be engaged in an activity designed to help them make sense of new material. This may be followed by another period of exposition and an appropriate exercise.

The phases are not always sequential. Review, for example, is not confined to the end of the lessons. Good teachers weave review through the entire lesson in “mini plenaries”.

## Phase One – Overview

The emphasis on this phase is on:

### **Creating an appropriate working atmosphere**

Pupils will not learn if they are not in an appropriate state to learn. We use a range of strategies to establish a climate conducive to learning including:

- Creating a classroom environment that is stimulating, reassuring and organised
- Being fully prepared for lessons
- Ensuring where appropriate that resources are prepared and on tables in advance of lessons.
- Greeting pupils with a smile!

### **Linking the lesson to prior learning** e.g. reviewing previous lesson

- Think about the three most important things you learnt in the last lesson - now tell your partner.
- In two minutes, I am going to ask you what you learnt last lesson. You may talk to your partner if you wish.
- Today’s lesson is about the water cycle. Jot down on your whiteboards what you already know. Work in pairs.

### **Providing an overview**

The brain is more likely to absorb details when it can place them within a wider context. This is often referred to as ‘providing the big picture first’.

### **Sharing learning objectives/Success Criteria with pupils**

Pupils must know exactly what they are going to learn and what is expected of them by the end of the lesson.

For learning objectives and success criteria to be shared effectively, teachers must:

- Move away from saying ‘Today we are doing’... and instead say ‘By the end of today’s lesson you will all know/be able to/understand...’.
- Make SC specific to the learning activity and ensure that they provide the appropriate steps/method required to meet the Learning objective.
- Discuss, develop and agree with pupils prior to undertaking the activity
- Ensure that children need to be aware of what they need to be successful and are often involved in generating the success criteria.
- Provide a scaffold and focus for pupils while engaged in the activity
- Use child-friendly language – (ensuring they learn the appropriate language for the concept) there is little point in sharing learning objectives if pupils don’t understand what you mean.
- Ensure they are evident in the children’s books and **visible in the room.**(90% of what the brain remembers is derived from visible images
- Refer to them regularly: at the start of the lesson, during the lesson (to re-inforce/ re-focus, promote successful work) and during the review phase (self and peer assessment).

## Phase Two – Teaching (pupils receive new information)

The emphasis in this phase is on providing students with new information or skills.

This is the **teaching** phase. Although we want all pupils to understand the information as they encounter it, the emphasis during phase two is on providing the new information. New information is delivered in many ways:

- Exposition
- Audio-visual aids – e.g. video clips
- Diagrams, pictures etc
- ICT – CD roms, Internet
- Demonstration
- Modelling
- Books

The quality of the input during this phase will have a big bearing upon the extent to which pupils understand information. While high-quality exposition does not guarantee understanding, it does make it significantly more likely.

### **Periods of exposition are short**

Pupils have limited concentration spans. A widely used and useful rule of thumb is that concentration span will be about two minutes in excess of chronological age.

### **More than one ‘beginning’ is created**

Pupils tend to remember more from the beginning of an experience. When exposition is chunked into 10-15 minute slots, a number of ‘beginnings’ are created in the lesson. Make the new start obvious. Use phrases such as, ‘Now we are moving on to ...’ or ‘The next activity we are going to be doing ...’. I want you to move back to the carpet for the next part of our lesson.

### **The input phase is punctuated with questions**

Although phase two is principally about exposition and delivering new information, it should be punctuated by regular questioning.

Ask regular closed questions during the input. This will keep pupils alert and provide instant feedback as to whether they have heard correctly and have understood – although at a shallow level. Asking too many open questions during an explanation can easily take a lesson off on inappropriate tangents. It also allows an individual to take the lesson off in a direction that causes other students to lose their train of thought.

Ask open questions before and/or after an input. Posing an open question at the start of an explanation will prime the brain to notice detail and begin to form an answer, even at a subconscious level, during the input. Asking an open question at the end of an input takes the learning into phase three and is designed to develop and assess deeper understanding.

### **The input phase is punctuated with activity**

Punctuate the input of new information (phase two) with activities designed to help pupils make sense of it (phase three).

*For example, a teacher might be modelling how to write complex sentences. She might ask the children to work with a partner to write one together on a mini whiteboard before continuing with further instruction.*

### **New information is presented in several different ways**

The fact that people prefer to receive information in different ways demands that information is transmitted in more than one way during phase two. A verbal explanation may well be clear, concise and of high quality. However, two thirds of the class may be working outside of their preferred style and struggle to grasp what is being said.

We aim to make learning multi-sensory so that pupils have opportunities to learn from seeing, hearing and doing.

## **Phase Three – Learning (pupils process the information)**

The emphasis in phase three is on:

- developing understanding
- demonstrating understanding
- assessing understanding

This is the **key phase**. It is the opportunity for pupils to make sense of information. We play a significant role during this crucial phase, encouraging and reassuring at an emotional level and guiding, prompting and challenging pupils towards understanding.

The extent to which pupils will progress depends on key factors which will include reference to the learning objective and success criteria to re-inforce/ re-focus, promote successful work.

Key areas:

### **a) Quality of interactions**

It is adults who help pupils make sense of information. The frequency and nature of interactions between teacher and pupils is highly significant. We develop understanding by:

- Asking a large proportion of open questions
- Allowing sufficient processing time for pupils to think about their answers
- Allowing pupils to talk to each other
- Asking supplementary or extension questions to extend understanding
- Asking questions to encourage pupils to reflect upon their thinking
- Challenging thinking

### **b) Effective questioning strategies that we use include:**

- Using open questions
- Providing wait time- pupils need time to think through their answers before replying.
- Providing thinking time by giving an advance warning, such as, 'When we've finished this part I am going to ask you....' 'At the end of the lesson I am going to ask you..'
- Allowing pupils to explore and articulate their thinking by giving them time to discuss their responses in pairs or groups. Pupils then respond with 'We think that...'

- Ensuring pupils fully understand the question by asking them to say it back or rephrase it.
- Extending and deepening understanding by asking follow-up questions such as 'What made you think that?'
- Using strategies such as true/false, agree/disagree questions

### c) Talking

We learn:

- 10% of what we read
- 20% of what we hear
- 30% of what we see
- 50% of what we see and hear
- 70% of what we discuss with others

When we talk, we do more than articulate our current level of understanding. The very act of talking forces us to organise our thoughts and so deepens understanding. It is partly the reason why we remember so much of what we teach to others.

At our school we believe that **Talking** is central to learning. All lessons include planned and unplanned opportunities to discuss questions and extend thinking Think/Pair/Share and Tell your Talk Partner are regular features in all lessons. Talk partners should change regularly allowing children the opportunity to engage with different learners in the class. Pupils are trained to use appropriate body language when talking to a partner and pupils understand that their **TALK** is valued as much as their written work.

### d) Tasks that engage pupils and challenge them to think

Making personal sense of information involves re-creating and assimilating it into existing understanding. It is an active process and demands that the learner actually does something, not least at a cognitive level. Activities in this phase:

- Require pupils to do something at a cognitive level
- Provide a degree of challenge
- Require pupils to re-create rather than re-produce information
- Develop understanding
- Allow pupils to demonstrate understanding
- Give the teacher an opportunity to assess understanding.
- Encourage pupils to work both independently and collaboratively
- Encourage pupils to work for a sustained period

## Phase Four – Review (Plenary)

The emphasis in this phase is on:

- Reviewing what has been learned
- Reflecting on how it has been learned.
- Identifying next steps in learning.

Review is a key to memory and certainly not confined to the end of the lesson. Good teachers weave review throughout the entire lesson and are constantly referring students back to the objectives of the lesson, and reinforcing prior learning. Reviewing material is a highly significant part of the learning process, not least because large amounts of information can be forgotten very quickly.

Key features of the plenary are:

### **Pupils are actively involved**

When teachers summarise what has been learned, the effect on pupils' memories is relatively insignificant. However when the pupils themselves identify what they have learned as the lesson draws to a close, their memories will be given a significant boost.

At St Joseph's we use prompts such as:

*What are the three most important/interesting things you've learned today? What three questions could you answer now that you couldn't answer at the beginning of the lesson? Refer back to the learning objectives and success criteria – share and discuss.*

### **Pupils end the lesson knowing what they know**

Encourage pupils to reflect on what they have learned and what has helped them to learn.

Use prompts like:

- What did you do today that you found most helpful when you were learning?
- What did you do today that you found less helpful?
- If you had to do the task again, how would you do it?
- If you had to give one piece of advice to someone tackling the same task tomorrow, what would it be?
- Where can you identify the success criteria in your work?
- Which of the success criteria was most important/helped you in the lesson?

The following policies must be adhered to in order to support the Learning and Teaching policy: Marking and Feedback, Behaviour, Computing and the Staff Handbook

## **Key elements and principles of teaching and learning at St Joseph's**

### ***All lessons have...Clear Learning Objectives and Success Criteria***

- All learning objectives are written up and shared orally ensuring the correct terminology is used and understood..
- Learning objectives are not muddled up with the context of the lesson.
- When marking children's work, the main focus is on meeting the learning objective and success criteria.

### ***All lessons have... Well planned success criteria***

- All pupils are clear about how they will achieve the learning objective.
- Success criteria are displayed for the children to follow during the lesson or drawn up with the children.
- Weekly planning includes success criteria and EBI where appropriate for each learning objective.
- Children use the success criteria to self-assess their own work in each lesson or their partner's work where appropriate.
- Children are reminded of the success criteria during the lesson – often children's work is used to illustrate the success criteria in action.

### ***All lessons are ...Clearly differentiated to enable all pupils to access learning***

- All learners are challenged appropriately.
- Planning shows clear differentiation.
- Adults and resources are used effectively to challenge and support pupils.
- Differentiation may be planned through lesson activities or by lesson outcomes.

### ***All pupils are...Actively engaged in learning***

- Pupils are actively engaged during all parts of the lesson – teachers take into account children's concentration span and ensure pupils are not sitting passively for long periods.
- Opportunities to Think/Pair/Share and discussions with a Talk Partner are regular features in all lessons. Pupils are trained to use appropriate body language when engaged in discussion with a partner.
- Mini whiteboards and other resources are used for short bursts of activity, to develop understanding and to ensure children are active and engaged during the lesson.
- Visualisers, artefacts, auditory input are all used creatively as a way to enhance learning.

### ***All pupils receive regular and clear ...feedback which enhances learning***

- Formative assessment is embedded in everyday practice and is used to inform teaching and learning.
- All pupils are clear about how they need to improve- pupils are guided through effective marking and through pupil target setting.

- Marking is linked to the learning objective and success criteria and identifies next step prompts – see Marking and Feedback Policy.
- Pupils are given regular time to address issues raised in marking and to appropriately respond to this.

#### *Learning is enhanced through ...The use of I.T.*

- I.T. is used to enhance learning where ever possible. Although I.T.is nearly always used at the start of lessons to engage children and in the plenary to consolidate learning, it is also used during the lesson as an aid to learning. The use of I.T. is highly visible and effective in all teaching and learning contexts across our school and teachers are continually searching for ways to use technology as a learning tool.

#### *Learning is enhanced through the use of... Consistent classroom management signals*

- Clear management signals are designed to minimise the time spent on behaviour management and maximise the time spent on learning
- High expectations of all of the children they are teaching.

#### *Learning is enhanced through the...Effective use of additional adults.*

- Planning is shared in advance with teaching assistants.
- Additional adults are clearly directed to support learning.
- Teaching assistants are fully engaged with pupils on the carpet and tables during lesson times. They are not photocopying work, sharpening pencils or sticking work in books during learning time.
- They are clear about who they are supporting and why.
- They sit next to the pupil/pupils they are working with, quietly engaging the pupils, explaining the task or using other resources, e.g. number line to facilitate learning.
- They are involved in assessing pupil's understanding, recording observations and feeding assessments into formative assessment.

**Reminders for ensuring high quality learning and teaching.**

Am I crystal clear about what I want the children to be able to do/to know at the end of the lesson?	Have I made sure children are not going to be sitting passively for long periods?
Have I thought about the questions I will need to <b>ask to deepen children's understanding/assess learning</b> ?	Have I shared the planning with my teaching assistant? Is he/she clear who he/she is supporting and how?
Have I set clear expectations of what pupils are expected to achieve by the end of the session?	Have I planned opportunities for pupils to talk about their learning in pairs and groups?
Am I going to be introducing new vocabulary to the children?	Have I thought about the steps to success and planned the success criteria in advance?
How am I going to meet the learning styles of all pupils?	Have I thought about how I will meet the needs of all learners, including the more able? Are activities challenging and designed to deepen understanding?
How am I going to conduct my plenary?	Am I giving the children thinking and talking time before answering questions?
Have I written the learning objective and success criteria up on the whiteboard in child-friendly language?	Have I included any time for pupils to respond to marking from previous lesson?
Have I thought about how I am going to engage and motivate the children at the start and during the lesson?	Have I got a balance of teacher instruction, intervention and children working independently?
Have I thought about how I will meet the needs of the EAL learners in my class, e.g. what visuals will I use in the lesson?	How are pupils going to assess their own learning or that of their peers?

# Teachers' Standards that underpin outstanding teaching and learning.

## PREAMBLE

Teachers make the education of their pupils their first concern, and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills as teachers up-to-date and are self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with parents in the best interests of their pupils.

## PART ONE: TEACHING

### A teacher must:

#### 1. Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils

- establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in mutual respect.
- set goals that stretch and challenge pupils of all backgrounds, abilities and dispositions.
- demonstrate consistently the positive attitudes, values and behaviour which are expected of pupils.

#### 2. Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils

- be accountable for pupils' attainment, progress and outcomes.
- be aware of pupils' capabilities and their prior knowledge, and plan teaching to build on these.
- guide pupils to reflect on the progress they have made and their emerging needs.
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn and how this impacts on teaching.
- encourage pupils to take a responsible and conscientious attitude to their own work and study.

#### 3. Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge

- have a secure knowledge of the relevant subject(s) and curriculum areas, foster and maintain pupils' interest in the subject, and address misunderstandings.
- demonstrate a critical understanding of developments in the subject and curriculum areas, and promote the value of scholarship.
- demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject.
- if teaching early reading, demonstrate a clear understanding of systematic synthetic phonics.
- if teaching early mathematics, demonstrate a clear understanding of appropriate teaching strategies.

#### 4. Plan and teach well-structured lessons

- impart knowledge and develop understanding through effective use of lesson time.
- promote a love of learning and children's intellectual curiosity.
- set homework and plan other out-of-class activities to consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding pupils have acquired.
- reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching.
- contribute to the design and provision of an engaging curriculum within the relevant subject area(s).

#### 5. Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils

- know when and how to differentiate appropriately, using approaches which enable pupils to be taught effectively.
- have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' ability to learn, and how best to overcome these.
- demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support pupils' education at different stages of development.

- have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them.

#### **6. Make accurate and productive use of assessment**

- know and understand how to assess the relevant subject and curriculum areas, including statutory assessment requirements.
- make use of formative and summative assessment to secure pupils' progress.
- use relevant data to monitor progress, set targets, and plan subsequent lessons.
- give pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback.

#### **7. Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment**

- have clear rules and routines for behaviour in classrooms, and take responsibility for promoting good and courteous behaviour both in classrooms and around the school, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy.
- have high expectations of behaviour, and establish a framework for discipline with a range of strategies, using praise, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly.
- manage classes effectively, using approaches which are appropriate to pupils' needs in order to involve and motivate them.
- maintain good relationships with pupils, exercise appropriate authority, and act decisively when necessary.

#### **8. Fulfil wider professional responsibilities**

- make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the school.
- develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how and when to draw on advice and specialist support.
- deploy support staff effectively.
- take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues.
- communicate effectively with parents with regard to pupils' achievements and well-being.

### **PART TWO: PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school by:

- treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position.
- having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions.
- showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others.
- not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.

Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

# School inspection handbook

AUGUST 2016



## Grade descriptors for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Note: Grade descriptors are not a checklist. Inspectors adopt a 'best fit' approach that relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

### Outstanding (1)

- Teachers demonstrate deep knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. They use questioning highly effectively and demonstrate understanding of the ways pupils think about subject content. They identify pupils' common misconceptions and act to ensure they are corrected.
- Teachers plan lessons very effectively, making maximum use of lesson time and coordinating lesson resources well. They manage pupils' behaviour highly effectively with clear rules that are consistently enforced.
- Teachers provide adequate time for practice to embed the pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills securely. They introduce subject content progressively and constantly demand more of pupils. Teachers identify and support any pupil who is falling behind, and enable almost all to catch up.
- Teachers check pupils' understanding systematically and effectively in lessons, offering clearly directed and timely support.
- Teachers provide pupils with incisive feedback, in line with the school's assessment policy, about what pupils can do to improve their knowledge, understanding and skills. The pupils use this feedback effectively.
- Teachers set challenging homework, in line with the school's policy and as appropriate for the age and stage of pupils, that consolidates learning, deepens understanding and prepares pupils very well for work to come.
- Teachers embed reading, writing and communication and, where appropriate, mathematics exceptionally well across the curriculum, equipping all pupils with the necessary skills to make progress. For younger children in particular, phonics teaching is highly effective in enabling them to tackle unfamiliar words.
- Teachers are determined that pupils achieve well. They encourage pupils to try hard, recognise their efforts and ensure that pupils take pride in all aspects of their work. Teachers have consistently high expectations of all pupils' attitudes to learning.
- Pupils love the challenge of learning and are resilient to failure. They are curious, interested learners who seek out and use new information to develop, consolidate and deepen their knowledge, understanding and skills. They thrive in lessons and also regularly take up opportunities to learn through extra-curricular activities.
- Pupils are eager to know how to improve their learning. They capitalise on opportunities to use feedback, written or oral, to improve.
- Parents are provided with clear and timely information on how well their

child is progressing and how well their child is doing in relation to the standards expected. Parents are given guidance about how to support their child to improve.

- Teachers are quick to challenge stereotypes and the use of derogatory language in lessons and around the school. Resources and teaching strategies reflect and value the diversity of pupils' experiences and provide pupils with a comprehensive understanding of people and communities beyond their immediate experience.

### **Good (2)**

- Teachers use effective planning to help pupils learn well. Time in lessons is used productively. Pupils focus well on their learning because teachers reinforce expectations for conduct and set clear tasks that challenge pupils.
- In lessons, teachers develop, consolidate and deepen pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. They give sufficient time for pupils to review what they are learning and to develop further. Teachers identify and support effectively those pupils who start to fall behind and intervene quickly to help them to improve their learning.
- Teachers use their secure subject knowledge to plan learning that sustains pupils' interest and challenges their thinking. They use questioning skilfully to probe pupils' responses and they reshape tasks and explanations so that pupils better understand new concepts. Teachers tackle misconceptions and build on pupils' strengths.
- Teachers give pupils feedback in line with the school's assessment policy. Pupils use this feedback well and they know what they need to do to improve.
- Teachers set homework, in line with the school's policy and as appropriate for the age and stage of pupils, that consolidates learning and prepares pupils well for work to come.
- Teachers develop pupils' reading, writing and communication, and where appropriate mathematics, well across the curriculum. For younger children in particular, the teaching of phonics is effective in enabling them to tackle unfamiliar words.
- Teachers expect and encourage all pupils to work with positive attitudes so that they can apply themselves and make strong progress.
- Pupils develop the capacity to learn from mistakes and they become keen learners who want to find out more. Most are willing to find out new information to develop, consolidate and deepen their knowledge, understanding and skills, both in lessons and in extra-curricular activities.
- Most pupils commit to improving their work. They are given time to apply their knowledge and understanding in new ways that stretches their thinking in a wide range of subjects, and to practise key skills.
- The school gives parents accurate information about how well their child is progressing, how well their child is doing in relation to the standards expected, and what their child needs to do to improve.
- Teachers challenge stereotypes and the use of derogatory language in lessons and around the school. Teachers promote equality of opportunity and diversity in teaching and learning.

### **Requires improvement (3)**

- Teaching, learning and assessment are not yet good.