

Princefield First School

Learning and Teaching Policy

Introduction

At Princefield First School we believe that effective learning and teaching are at the heart of any successful school. Our learning and teaching policy aims to ensure that our children are provided with high quality, differentiated experiences that lead to a consistently high level of pupil achievement.

Our learning and teaching policy is at the heart of all we do and sets out clear expectations, provides a consistent, uniform approach, which can be easily monitored and ensures equal opportunity for all our pupils.

Aims and Objectives

We believe that children learn best in different ways. At Princefield we provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows children to develop their skills and abilities to reach their full potential.

Through our teaching we aim to:

- enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners;
- foster children's self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with other people;
- develop children's self-respect and encourage children to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others;
- show respect for all cultures and, in so doing, promote positive attitudes towards other people;
- enable children to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of Princefield School;
- help children grow into successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens.

Effective Teaching and Learning

At Princefield effective teaching and learning go hand in hand. Effective learning only comes about from effective teaching. When teaching we focus on motivating the children and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. Below is a list that details what the staff and governors at Princefield feel are features of effective teaching. We do not expect to see all elements in all

lessons but would expect to see significant evidence of this 'quality first teaching' over time and this clearly impacting on the progress of the children.

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Features of Effective Teaching- A Checklist for Lessons

- **Expectations of learning are high.**
Pupils know what good learning looks like. (This includes developing and reflecting on their key learning skills.)
- **LO and success criteria are shared and explored and the “Big picture” explained, drawing on links with other subjects and/ or prior learning.**
- **Success criteria secures progression & is linked to subject standards to scaffold all learners. Begins to involve pupils in establishing their own success criteria.**
- **Modified published materials are used to meet the needs of all pupils.**
- **Key questions are identified that will challenge the more able learners.**
- **The teacher relates the task to the LO throughout the lesson.**
- **Technical vocabulary is referred to and used by pupils.**
- **Displays & SC are used to prompt children’s thinking.**
- **Working walls are used in the lesson by children.**
- **Resources support independent learning.**
- **All children take an active part in the lesson.**
- **There is a productive climate for learning, with rewards and consequences operated fairly by all.**
- **Pupils are encouraged to verbalise their thinking through whole class discussion and response partners.**
- **ICT clearly engages pupils interactively.**
- **Well directed teaching assistants reinforce and support learning very effectively.**
- **All pupils make progress in the lesson, recognising and improving their achievements against the success criteria.**
- **All can explain what they are trying to learn and their next steps.**
- **The plenary is used as an opportunity for pupils to evaluate their learning. It should have a clear AfL focus including next steps.**
- **All pupils should understand how to check their own progress against the success criteria.**
- **Children are given time to improve their work in response to feedback.**
- **Pupils are regularly involved in helping to assess their own work.**
- **Pupils are set appropriately challenging targets to move quickly.**

- **Assessment informs immediate planning.**

Developing the Skills of Learning

We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn – what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn. We have a whole school approach to promoting effective skills for learning with our children. These are displayed in each classroom and are referred to on a regular basis through classroom discussion, marking, and target setting. The children also review their progress against the success criteria for each key skill. (See below.)

1. Develop Independence

I can organise myself so that I am ready to learn

I can get on with my work without needing prompting

I know what to do if I am stuck

I am able to make decisions and take responsibility for them

I am able to apply what I know and use my initiative to solve problems

2. Push Yourself & Work Hard

I give my best effort to everything I do

I can work hard when I try

I push myself in lots of ways even when I find things difficult or don't feel like doing them

I try to improve things that I am already good at

I encourage others to work hard

3. Concentrate & Don't Give up

I know what helps me concentrate

I stick to things even if they are tough

I am learning how to tune out distractions

I find new ways to do something if my ideas don't work out

I look for positives in mine and others learning

4. Understand Others

I treat others as I expect to be treated

I listen carefully to others

I think about how my behaviour can affect others

I share, cooperate and contribute to group activities

I can reflect on and review my learning behaviour and how it affects others

5. Try New Things

I like doing things I have not tried before

I am willing to 'Have go!'

I know it is okay to get things wrong sometimes

I have lots of ideas and am able to use them

I know what I am good at, but know there are lots of other things in the world to try out

Planning

Staff plan collaboratively in teams to ensure continuity and progression as we have mixed age classes, with year groups spread across 2/3 classes. This enables expertise to be shared as well as more experienced staff supporting those at the beginning of their teaching career. Staff look for ways of tailoring planning, where possible, to particular interests or where cohorts have a particular need and ensures that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability. We have high expectations of all children, including the most able, and believe that their work here at Princefield First School is of the highest possible standard.

Where extra support is needed to bridge any gaps in children's knowledge/skills or to provide extra challenge, staff plan intervention activities for individuals or small groups based on their assessed needs. These are evaluated regularly to ensure that they are having measurable impact and to set next steps.

When planning work for children with special educational needs we give due regard to information and targets contained in the children's Individual Provision Maps. Reasonable adjustments will be made by all concerned to ensure that all disabled pupils can fully participate in the curriculum. This will be achieved by:-

- Forward planning and identifying practical barriers;

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- Working collaboratively with disabled pupils their parents and others ensuring staff involved have necessary skills to identify practical solutions through a problem solving approach;
- Monitoring the effects of adjustments on a pupil's progress.

We ask that all classrooms are dyslexia friendly environments.

We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives and targeted success criteria which ensures appropriate differentiation. These are also used during and at the end of the lessons to reflect on the progress made towards achieving them. We take these objectives from the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum (See section below) and the National Curriculum (Revised 2014). Our school website has further information about the curriculum we offer.

We evaluate and annotate planning so that we can modify and improve our teaching in the future.

We endeavour to establish good working relationships with all children in the class. We treat the children with kindness and respect. We treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in all class activities. All our teachers follow the school policy with regard to discipline and behaviour. Alongside the whole school **Princefield Code**, staff set and agree with children their class code of conduct. We expect all children to comply with these rules to promote the best learning opportunities for all.

We ensure that all tasks and activities that the children do are safe. When we plan to take children out of school, we first inform parents and obtain their permission and complete required risk assessments.

We deploy learning assistants and other adult helpers as effectively as possible, ensuring that they contribute to the learning in the lesson. Sometimes they work with individual children, pairs or small groups.

All our teachers reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and plan their professional development needs accordingly alongside school priorities identified through the School Development Plan. We do all we can to support our teachers in developing their skills so that they can continually improve their practice (see Teacher Appraisal Policy).

The Learning Environment

The learning environment should be organised to ensure that all children have the opportunity to learn in different ways. We believe that a stimulating

environment sets the climate for learning, and an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by the children.

Working Walls are used by staff to give children prompts, ideas, key vocabulary and anything else that will help them with their learning. Staff also display excellent pieces of work that act as a good example to pupils of the expectations required. These are displayed with good practice highlighted so pupils are clear on what is required. Literacy and Maths skills have a prominent place within the classroom environment, as part of a cross curricular approach, which allows them to be used and applied across a range of subject areas.

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Nursery and Foundation Class follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. The principles which guide our teaching are grouped into four themes:

A Unique Child – we recognise that every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Positive Relationships – that children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.

Enabling Environments – we recognise the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children’s development and learning.

Learning and Development – that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

Teaching and Learning Aims

- To recognise that early years is a distinctive phase of a child’s education requiring specialised teaching to a developmentally appropriate curriculum.
- To observe, support and extend the individual child’s learning and to recognise that they are entitled to learn at their own pace and in their own way.
- To ensure a partnership approach, between teachers and learners and parents for the benefit of all.
- To understand and identify ways in which learning occurs, enabling teachers to plan, teach and resource appropriately.
- Staff can motivate children better when they have sound understanding of child development and when they get to know the individual child and their interests.

- To enable children to reach their best potential by providing specific support at critical points in their learning

Developing the Characteristics of Effective Learning

Lots of opportunities are given for the children to develop the key skills and the characteristics that enable them to become effective learners in a broad and balanced curriculum based on the 7 specific and prime areas of learning.

- **Playing and Exploring**
- **Active Learning**
- **Creating and Thinking Critically**

Each day the learning environment is structured in such a way that the resources, equipment and staff are available for the children to access planned areas of development through many first hand experiences. The daily routine remains the same e.g. snack time, story time etc to enable the children to feel secure. Daily planning will include periods where there is direct and focused teaching input. This may include the whole group, small groups or one to one teaching.

The Role of Governors:

Governors determine, support, monitor and review the school policies on teaching and learning. In particular they:

- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively
- ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning
- monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations
- monitor how effective learning and teaching strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment and achievement
- ensure that staff development and teacher appraisal policies promote good quality teaching
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the school self-review processes. These include reports from subject leaders and the Headteacher's report to governors as well as review of data, including RAISE-On line and the Data Dashboard.

The Role of Parents

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children learn. We do all we can to inform parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- holding parents' evenings to explain our school strategies for teaching new initiatives and updating as appropriate
- informing parents at the start of each term the topics that the children will be studying at school
- sending learning targets home each term through our 'Learning Conversations' enabling parents to support their child in the next stage of learning
- explaining to parents how they can support their children with homework (see Homework Policy)
- termly parents' evenings and an end of year written report

We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We would like parents to:

- ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible
- ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and PE kit
- do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school
- inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school this can be done through the Home-School Links Book or coming into school to talk to their class teacher or where necessary, the headteacher
- promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general, including supporting their child in completing homework
- fulfil the requirements set out in the home/school agreement

Monitoring

Each class teacher is accountable to the headteacher for the quality of learning and teaching, as well as the assessment and standards achieved by children in their class. Subject leaders have the responsibility to ensure that subjects are taught in accordance with the school's policy and that staff have the required training and resources. These responsibilities are laid down in job descriptions and through the Teacher Standards. A monitoring timetable is drawn up at the beginning of each academic year, detailing the focus and method of monitoring to be carried out. Staff receive feedback which details strengths, areas for development and subsequent areas for action.

Review

We are aware of the need to review the school learning and teaching policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school.

Supporting policies:

Assessment for Learning Policy

Behaviour Policy

Marking and Responding Policy

Princefield SEND Offer

Date written: March 2015 Review date: Sept 2017 or sooner if new developments/initiatives occur