

Wicklewood Primary School and Nursery



Teaching and Learning Policy

Responsible Person

The person for the updating of this policy is: The Headteacher

Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed every year by the staff.

Learning is the core purpose of our school and is central to everything that happens. In order for there to be effective learning which leads to consistently high levels of pupil achievement there needs to be high quality teaching.

Every child deserves a good teacher.

By having a whole school approach to teaching and learning we aim to:

- Provide consistency of teaching and learning across our school.
- Enable teachers to deliver high quality learning experiences using a wide range of strategies.
- Ensure all pupils are motivated and inspired to learn and have high aspirations for themselves.
- Give pupils the skills they require to be lifelong learners ready for the challenges of the future.
- Provide a framework for teaching and learning within which there is scope for flexibility, creativity, imagination, individuality and spontaneity.
- Learn from each other, through the adoption of a collaborative, enquiry based approach to teaching and learning, where good practice is shared and reflected on.
- Ensure every child is supported to make good or better progress.

There is no single recipe for delivering outstanding teaching and learning in a school. This guide is intended to outline some of the key elements of effective practice in teaching and learning which we believe will make the biggest difference to the outcomes for pupils in our school.

Learning at Wicklewood is a flexible framework for a high quality learning experience. It may be a 10 minute lesson or a unit of work. Different amounts of time will be spent on different areas dependent on the needs of the pupils and the intended outcomes of the learning experience. It should provide a broad template for outstanding learning but should not preclude flexibility, creativity, imagination, individuality and spontaneity.

All children are encouraged to have a Growth Mindset.

They want to learn new things; get excited by challenge; set themselves goals and use strategies to achieve them; they want to find things out for ourselves; they realise that feedback will help them to improve; and they realise that if they can't do something they just can't do it yet!

The following are the key elements for high quality teaching and learning.

All lessons across our school should include the following key elements to ensure high quality teaching and learning. New teachers to the school will receive training as part of their induction to ensure they fully understand these elements and to enable them to embed them in their everyday practice.

Subject Knowledge

It is vital that teachers have a good command of the subject they are teaching. This will allow them to approach the lesson confidently, flexibly and with the ability to differentiate explanations on a subject, allow expansion into areas that interest the pupils and ask appropriate questions. It also allows them to skilfully guide learners into the next stage of learning thus providing challenge and support. Training will be given, if appropriate.

Planning

All lessons must be carefully planned. There needs to be a clear learning objective. They should be personalised to meet the needs of the children within the class. They should be annotated showing assessments made during the lesson and changes made to following lessons if needed.

Purpose

Lessons should have a clear purpose to them - why are the children learning the skills/knowledge and has this been shared with them? The purpose should be current and relevant to the learners. The outcome of the lesson/unit needs to be shared with them so they know what they are working towards and why.

Learning Objective

Pupils must have the learning objective shared with them so they know exactly what they are going to learn and what is expected of them by the end of the lesson. To share them effectively teachers could say 'Today we are learning...' (not 'doing') or 'By the end of today's lesson you will all know/be able to/understand...'. They should be written down and referred to throughout the lesson. They should be in child-friendly language so pupils understand what they mean- otherwise there is little point to them.

Success criteria/Steps to success and / or toolkit

All pupils need to be clear about how they will achieve the learning intention. These can be written by the teacher or by the children. They need to be displayed for all to see or stuck in to books. Success Criteria can be used by pupils to evaluate their own, or a partner's, learning during and at the end of a lesson.

The Bigger Picture

Children need to know what they are learning and why- links need to be made with previous and future learning as well as the wider world. A lesson may begin with a quick recap- 'tell me 3 things you remember from the last lesson...', 'tell a partner 3 things you already know about...' The children need to know how the learning in the lesson links to previous learning. The brain is more likely to take on new information when it can place it in the bigger picture. This needs to be made explicit to the pupils.

Engagement

For pupils to learn effectively they need to be engaged with the learning. By capturing the imagination and stimulating curiosity from the very start we go a long way to ensuring a high quality learning experience. There are a number of different and imaginative and creative ways teachers can do this to light the spark: an image, stimulus, objects, resources including ICT, visitor, experience, teacher/pupils in role, pupils doing, teacher enthusiasm, a question, multi-sensory activities, paired and group work, pupils as teachers etc. A variety of strategies need to be used to ensure teaching does not become too routine and repetitive. Pupils need to be actively engaged in all parts of the lesson- teachers must take into account pupil's concentration span and ensure pupils are not sitting passively for long periods of time (a rough guide is the child's age plus one so a 7 year old can sustain concentration for 8 minutes before the activity needs to be punctuated). The use of mini-whiteboards, number fans, phonics cards etc. are key ways to ensure all children are involved.

Motivation

Pupils need to be motivated to learn both intrinsically and extrinsically. They need to know what's in it for them- has the teacher explained why they are learning this? By adopting an enquiry-based approach pupils should have ownership of the question they are seeking to answer. If they are given choices in their learning this contributes to the feeling of ownership. Rewards, competition, collaboration and a culture of wanting to achieve the best they can are other ways pupils can be motivated. Teachers need to know what motivates their pupils and use this to their advantage. Use of Mantle of the Expert and Drama for Learning techniques help to engage the children.

Questioning

Regular high quality questioning, both by teachers and pupils, must be a key feature of every lesson. Open, closed, low and high order questions should be asked as and when appropriate to ascertain children's understanding, to develop their thinking and reasoning and lead to a deeper understanding. Pupils should be given time to think about their answer before responding, e.g. 'Think, Pair, Share', 'no hands', and given a range of ways to respond e.g. mini-whiteboards, number/punctuation fans. Pupils should be encouraged to respond to each other's responses and build on and question each other's ideas rather than just a pupil to teacher response. Children should have the opportunity to ask their own questions; these could be recorded on a 'question board', which then lead into their own enquiry based learning. Children should have opportunities to return to deeper open questions e.g through the use of post-its to write their responses on and place on a board. 'Show me, tell me, convince me' and digging deeper are strategies which can be used to develop children's thinking and understanding.

Challenge

Every pupil should be challenged appropriately. Some ways to challenge pupils could include: Pupils selecting different levels of work or questions to answer; pupils leading parts of the lesson- 'teaching' their peers or being the 'expert' in their group; applying their learning to open-ended activities; cross-phase working; different groupings to work in.

Remember:

Higher Order Thinking Skills

Blooms Taxonomy lists six thinking skills: knowledge, comprehension and application (lower) and analysis, synthesis and evaluation (higher). Questions and activities using High Order Thinking Skills should be planned for in advance of the lesson. They will enable children to be thinking and working at a higher level.

Modelling

Teachers need to model good learning behaviours throughout a lesson. Specific skills that the teacher wants the pupils to do within the lesson should be modelled in the lesson so that children can see how something can be done. When modelling a skill, teachers need to explain why they are doing it and show the process as well as the skill. Modelling should be kept short and learners should be active participants. This can be achieved through punctuated questions to keep pupils alert, and provide instant feedback on whether they are understanding, or by posing an open question or something for the children to look for during the modelling. Modelled work should be displayed for children to magpie and key aspects should be highlighted.

Talk

Talking is essential to high quality learning. When talking we have to organise our thoughts which then deepens our own understanding. Key strategies include 'Talk Partners' and 'Think, Pair, Share' where pupils have the opportunity to explore and articulate their thinking before responding. Pupils will need to be taught the skills of talking and listening so they can do these effectively. Teacher talk should always be less than pupil talk- a 30%:70% ratio is a good guide. Pupils will also be given opportunities to talk in role and to different audiences and for different purposes.

Independence

There should be planned opportunities for pupils to learn independently and take their own learning forward. This is very different from 'working on their own'. Pupils need to be taught how to learn independently and the skills they will need.

Collaboration

Pupils need to have opportunities to work with others. This should be in ability or mixed ability pairings and groupings. Pupils need to be taught how to work collaboratively. In group work each pupil could be given a role (scribe, leader, presenter, encourager, questioner etc) in which to develop their different skills.

Flexibility

Flexibility is key to good teaching. Teachers need to listen to children's responses and adapt lessons to meet the needs of the pupils. Teachers need to know exactly where children are in their learning so they can set appropriately challenging activities. This can be through questioning, or an 'Explore' task which works well in maths lessons. It is essential that teachers use the information given and groups are flexible.

Use of Teaching Assistants/Additional Adults

Additional adults must be clearly directed by the teacher to support learning. They need to know who they are supporting, how and why. Planning must be shared in advance. They need to be fully engaged with pupils during lessons: encouraging pupils, re-explaining something, questioning or using other resources and giving feedback. They can also be used to make observations about pupils understanding and feeding this assessment back to the teacher.

TA SPEAK: mediating, reinforcing, assessing or delivering intervention

Activities

Children should be given a range of activities which allow them to explore and make sense of their learning and develop their understanding in an active way. These should link to the learning intention and engage pupils and challenge them to think as well as practice and develop new skills. They should allow pupils to develop their understanding and recreate, not reproduce, information. Pupils should be encouraged to work both independently and collaboratively, in both pupil lead and teacher lead activities, and mover a sustained period. They should give the teacher the opportunity to assess misunderstanding. They need to be purposeful and learners encouraged to reflect throughout the process.

Reflection

Children should be given regular opportunities to reflect on their learning during and at the end of their lesson in the plenary. It is helpful to use the success criteria as a framework for this. The reflections should be on what has been learned and how it has been learned. These can be guided by prompts such as 'what have you learned today?', 'what helped you with your learning?', 'what do you need to learn next?' etc.

Feedback and marking

All pupils need to be given feedback which enhances learning. This can be done during and after a lesson either orally or written down. It is essential that pupils have time to read and understand this feedback and then act upon it.

Teachers will link marking to the learning intention and success criteria and identify next steps for the pupils. Pupils need to be clear about what they need to do to improve and how to achieve this. (See Marking Policies)

Differentiation

Lessons need to be clearly differentiated so that all learners are challenged appropriately and have access to the learning. These are some key ways this can be achieved: questions at different levels and using different size numbers for example, children self-selecting questions to challenge themselves, different activities, ability and mixed-ability pairings and groupings. The model we follow is the 'Three Peaks Challenge' with one peak being the easiest option and three being the most difficult. Further challenge can also be set for those working at greater depth.

Resources

There should be a range of resources used within the lesson to support the pupils learning. Pupils often need a visual representation of the learning to help them develop their understanding. High quality resources also enable learning to be multi-sensory and accommodate a range of learning styles. Pupils also need to be taught how to access resources independently e.g. dictionaries, writing frames, number lines etc and these need to be accessible to all, for example in a maths box on the table, and children taught how to use them- as well as know they can use them.

Display

The aims of all displays around the school are to celebrate pupils' work and achievements or to enhance the learning experience. Maths and English working walls are used to develop the units of work in progress and will consist of examples of work, questions, vocabulary, prompts, visuals to stimulate thinking etc. If time and effort is given to make a display look visually appealing and catch the attention of pupils it can greatly influence their performance in school.

Classroom Organisation

Classrooms need to be well organised with thought given to the appropriate layout of equipment and resources for the age group of the pupils and the learning experience. Good teachers will often adjust their environment for different learning experiences. They need to be tidy and free from clutter. They need to be safe and welcoming for all. Pupils and staff need to respect the space and equipment and take responsibility for ensuring it is well looked after.

Classroom Management

Positive behaviour management is key to setting the right tone for learning.

Behaviour is centred around 3 rules:

- to say 'please' and 'thank you'.
- there is a time to talk, a time to listen and a time to think. (Me, you, who?)
- to walk around the school (awesome walking).

The Behaviour Policy outlines rewards and sanctions used across the school in more detail.

Life-long learners

For pupils to become life-long learners with the necessary learning skills to be fully prepared for life in the twenty-first century we need to equip them with the attitude and skills to learn.

Key questions to ask when planning a lesson

- Am I absolutely clear on what it is I want the children to be able to know/do/understand at the end of this lesson?
- Is the 'Can I' written in child-friendly language?
- Do I know what the children need to do in order to be successful? (Success Criteria)
- Have I thought about the questions I need to ask to deepen children's understanding and/or assess their understanding?
- Have I thought about how I will engage and motivate the children at the start and during the lesson?
- Have I thought about how the activities will meet the needs of all the learners?
- Have I made it clear to pupils what the outcome of the lesson is and how this fits into the bigger picture?
- How will I respond to children's needs and reshape the learning as required?
- How will opportunities for talk assist the learning and be structured in a variety of different ways?
- How will I ensure the children will not be sitting passively for long periods of time?
- Have I included time for children to respond to feedback from the last lesson?
- Have I planned opportunities for children to talk about their learning in pairs or groups?
- Have I shared my planning with any additional adults and are they clear on how to support the learners?
- How are pupils going to assess their own learning and/or that of their peers?
- How am I going to conduct my plenary?
- Am I clear about what needs to be modelled for the children?

Also think about ...

Spark

This is where the children are inspired, engaged, motivated and excited to learn. The big picture is shared with the children and they know what the learning outcome is and how this relates to other learning.

Question

This is where the children ask questions about the learning. They make links to previous learning, sharing what they already know and can do. They discuss where they want to go with the learning.

Explore

This is where new information is presented to the children through practical experience and multi-sensory activities. Children are able to explore and question through discussion and reflection.

Apply

This is where children apply their new knowledge, skills and understanding through a range of activities building towards a learning outcome. They begin to make sense of their new learning.

Communicate

This is where children communicate their learning through a variety of forms (picture, presentation, writing, model, teaching others etc) in a high quality final piece. This is celebrated and feedback is given.

Review

This is where children review their learning so far. They evaluate what has worked well and what they need to do next. They use feedback given by peers and teachers and make adjustments where necessary.

Where next?

This is where children consider where their learning needs to go next. What else would they like to learn and how will they use and remember what they have learnt so far.

Reflection

This happens between each stage of the learning. Children reflect on their learning so far and what they need to learn next.

Further techniques to enable deeper learning experiences

Diamond 9

Children come up with 9 responses to a question and then prioritise.

Odd One Out

Children have three things/ideas/concepts/responses and decide which is the odd one out.

Learning Panes

Children write/draw one thing they know about a topic. They then talk to other children and collect other ideas.

WAGOLL- What a good one looks like

An example of a high quality outcome is shared with the children so they know what is possible.

Concept Mapping

Words/concepts are given to children (or their own are written) and they are linked with arrows. Reasons are given for the links.

TASC- Thinking Actively in a Social Context (Belle Wallace)

Children follow the process to develop their thinking and problem solving skills

Thinking Hats (Edward de Bono)

Children 'wear' different hats which symbolise thinking about a problem in a different way.

Positive, Minus, Interesting (PMI)

A list of positive, minus and interesting points are made about a subject.

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