

# REDLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY



At Redlands we aim to strive continually for high levels of achievement and challenge in a creative and nurturing environment which encourages children's aspirations, self-confidence and independence, and where children build meaningful relationships within both local and global communities (*School Vision*). We nurture the naturally inquisitive nature of every child, encouraging them to ask questions, explore and take risks with their learning through our Growth Mindset approach. Our high expectations inspire children to embrace learning and to view life as an adventure and harness life-long learning skills.

***“Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited while imagination embraces the whole world.” (Albert Einstein)***  
***“Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all...” (Aristotle)***

## 1. PRINCIPLES

- We advocate responsible citizenship.
- Reflecting and evaluating moves all our learning forward.
- We seek to face challenges with determination and resolve.
- We share the responsibility to earn and show respect.
- The rewards are on the journey, not just the destination.
- We believe in ourselves.

This Teaching and Learning Policy captures some of Redlands Primary School's most strongly held beliefs about the way children learn and what those beliefs mean for the way we teach.

## 2. AIMS

TO:

- secure high quality teaching and learning throughout the school.
- maintain and improve the quality of learning offered to pupils which stem from tangible first hand experiences.
- raise standards of attainment for all pupils across the school.
- Maintain an agreed range of practice at Redlands in respect of teaching and learning.
- sustain good behaviour management throughout the school.

## 3. ENTITLEMENT

3.1 We plan to meet the needs of all pupils with increasing effectiveness by offering a range of approaches to teaching and learning, and providing appropriate conditions for learning which are consistent across the school. The approaches adopted will be those that best develop the learning of our pupils and enhance the attainment of all.

3.2 Continuing professional development opportunities will be made available to all staff in order that they have the necessary skills, competencies and understandings that enable them to meet the above aims.

## 4. RATIONALE

4.1 Redlands Primary School has a distinctive ethos: a 'whole child' approach and a commitment to developing confident, enquiring children who have high self-esteem and are inspired by the world in which they live.

4.2 Inspirational thinkers and artists such as Charles Darwin, Wangari Mathai, Maya Angelou and Alison Lapper provide our model for learning. As passionate enquirers, these people model the skills of observation, scrutiny, questioning, comparison and contrast, ordering and evaluation.

For example, Darwin was utterly absorbed by the world in which he found himself, challenged by its complexity and inspired to push boundaries of understanding. His starting point was the particular, the local and the immediate context. In the same way our curriculum centres upon local and first-hand experience as a catalyst for our children's sense of enquiry, evaluation and imagination.

4.3 Our vision is to develop a community of motivated independent life-long learners. We are committed to developing our children's skills as 'connection-makers', to lead them towards becoming adults with the capacity and confidence to interpret their experience and to make sense of it in a complex world.

4.4 We prize authenticity and personal growth as highly as academic achievement, and we seek to give children a secure grounding in the knowledge and skills they will need throughout life. From entry to nursery or reception class, children learn how to engage in the here and now – from truly 'seeing' the world around them comes quality engagement and subsequently the desire to use these skills effectively.

4.5 Our approach to learning, for ourselves as teachers as well as our children, needs to be sensitively grown and nurtured over time, through planned sequences of real experiences and reflection. This is an opportunity to be bold and to take risks in a supportive community of teaching and learning. Together we are committed to leading children towards becoming independent learners who are inspired by their lives and who can express their complex responses to it.

## **5. CURRICULUM RATIONALE**

5.1 Our curriculum has been produced using our knowledge about how children learn. Should we have more information about what this research is? We have carefully considered where to position the experiences, skills and knowledge we believe our children need in order to be successful on their learning journeys.

5.2 We have taken the 2014 Primary National Curriculum and linked our topics and key skills to each curriculum area to ensure clear and consistent progression.

5.3 The topics we have produced are not carved in stone. We evaluate the success of each topic annually within the National Curriculum. This maintains the integrity of our curriculum coverage, continuity of skills development and the rich and varied experiences we expect to provide for all our pupils.

5.4 When planning for the children we plan with them in mind and reflect on lessons daily to best plan for their needs.

## **6. BASIC SKILLS**

6.1 We value the acquisition of basic skills as they form the scaffolding for all learning. These skills are vital for enabling all pupils to access the whole curriculum and to enhance future economic and social wellbeing. It is the responsibility of all staff to teach and extend the basic skills in mathematics and English.

6.2 Work will be carefully planned to ensure continuity and progression. We are acutely aware that children start at different points and consequently appropriate targets will be set for different groups of children and individuals. All pupils can expect quality first teaching in phonics, reading, writing and maths.

6.3 Children's progress will be continually assessed at least three times each year, through assessment for learning and summative assessment. Whole school tracking procedures are in place and action will be taken to support those whose progress is slow or those pupils falling behind expected levels. However assessment is used continually in lessons and giving feedback to children throughout the lesson is imperative to their progress.

6.4 Redlands recognises the roles that all parties play in order to support continuous improvement in basic skills. Dialogue with parents will be open and honest indicating achievement and effort in basic skills. Redlands will provide guidance and information for parents so that they can support their children's learning through letters, dialogue and workshops.

## **7. QUALITY FIRST TEACHING**

7.1 Lessons will provide a safe and exploratory environment for children to develop more autonomy over their learning and the questions that they pose. This will be evident in the responses of pupils during the lesson, the level of discussions in which they are engaged, the successful completion of tasks and the standard of work produced. It will be clear that expectations are consistently high.

7.2 There will be a range of questions in lessons from both teachers and pupils. The nature and depth of these should engage learners in applying their knowledge and skills and encourage thinking and the development of further skills.

7.3 Themes and lessons will be well paced according to the needs of the children. Pupil participation will be encouraged through high levels of interaction, pupil involvement, co-operative learning and a growth mindset approach.

## **8. GROWTH MINDSET**

8.1 At Redlands we truly believe a fixed mindset is a huge barrier to learning. A mindset can be changed whatever the age of a person, but the younger the child is when a growth mindset is fostered, the better the child's chance of success now and in later life.

8.2 The growth mindset culture at Redlands enables both staff and children to consider learning in a different way. The children understand that in order to learn they must be brave and make mistakes, and this allows them to tackle challenges they wouldn't have attempted before.

8.3 At Redlands we are aiming for a learning culture where:

- Pupils have self-belief and know how to learn
- Teachers have high expectations and believe that ALL pupils can succeed
- There is pupil involvement at all stages of learning, including the planning and development stage
- Pupils know learning objectives and are involved in generating success criteria
- There is discussion about what excellence looks like
- There is effective questioning
- There are talk partners and classroom discussion
- There is effective self, peer and teacher feedback.

8.4 What matters most, in terms of motivation, is whether we see ability as 'fixed' (an entity learner) or 'growth' (an incremental learner). Those with a 'fixed' mindset will only tackle tasks which they know, in advance, they will succeed at. Those with a 'growth' mindset will not only willingly tackle difficult tasks, but will actively thrive on them. Our aim must be to develop a growth mindset for all our pupils, for ourselves and for all adults involved in working with children.

## **9. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

9.1 In order to achieve our educational aims, we believe that learning environments should be carefully designed and thoughtfully organised to encourage enquiry and a desire to learn.

9.2 We expect our school environment (both inside and out) to inspire our community of learners. Each space should be carefully planned to encourage debate, to make people stop and think, to provide a space for quiet reflection but also to showcase work and to raise aspiration.

## **10. MARKING AND FEEDBACK**

10.1 Good marking and feedback are an integral part of the teaching and learning process. We believe that constructive feedback will enable pupils to focus on success and improvement needs against learning objectives. Such feedback will take place as close to the learning experience as possible.

10.2 In order for feedback to be formative we believe it must be used and acted on by the children. This process will enable them to become reflective learners and enable them to close the gap between current and desired performance.

10.3 Research evidence indicates that effective feedback is one of the highest impact approaches to raising educational standards in schools. We expect all staff to give high quality oral feedback to pupils in the moment to children so they are able to respond to it when it can make a big difference in their learning and mark work in the agreed way such that pupils are clear about their next learning steps.

## **11. DISPLAYS**

11.1 Good displays can create an atmosphere where children feel welcome and secure, where they feel a sense of belonging to the environment and of the environment belonging to them. Good displays create a rich learning environment that stimulates and sustains interest through sensual experience. Sensitive displays of children's work will demonstrate the teacher's respect for the child's efforts and contributions to the class.

11.2 The use of objects and artefacts as an integral part of a display creates interest and engagement. Objects and artefacts should be used within the classroom to reflect our approach to the curriculum and learning.

11.3 Displays may be moved from the classrooms to central areas from time to time so that our community can appreciate and value the work being undertaken in the school. These displays will reflect the high standards we expect and raise aspiration across the school.

## **12. CULTURAL ENTITLEMENT**

12.1 We are committed to providing a rich and vibrant curriculum for our pupils, where high quality cultural experiences are fundamental. We expect that every pupil at Redlands will have a variety of first-hand cultural experiences over the year as part of our thematic approach to the curriculum. We will promote this through our Children's Charter.

## **13. INCLUSION**

13.1 We are a fully inclusive school and will ensure that all children, irrespective of their background or level of need, are included within the school community. We have high aspirations for all pupils and we will provide equality of opportunity within the school. This is made clear by our Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Policy.

## **14. POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR**

14.1 We have high standards of behaviour and we expect pupils to behave appropriately and adhere to our golden rules. This is achieved through all staff responding to all behaviours consistently.

14.2 We expect to see groups of children working all around our school as learning takes place everywhere and is not limited to the classroom. These pupils may not be directly supervised and it is the responsibility of all of us to commend them but also to discipline if high standards of behaviour are not being adhered to.

## **15. EXTRA CURRICULAR LEARNING**

15.1 We will endeavour to provide a wide range of extra-curricular experiences that pupils can access as an extension to the opportunities provided within our curriculum.

15.2 Some of these may be run by external providers (who will be quality assured by the school) and by our own school staff.

15.3 Each term we will evaluate what is being offered and will always attempt to provide rich and varied opportunities for all children.

**Review date: Autumn 2020**