



# **East Harling Primary School and Nursery**

## **Teaching and Learning Policy**

**Date agreed by Governing Body: 02.02.12**  
**Review date: February 2014**



## Teaching and Learning Policy

### 1 Introduction

At East Harling Primary School and Nursery, we believe in the concept of lifelong learning, and in the idea that both adults and children learn new things every day. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone; in short, it should be fun. Through our teaching, we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives.

### 2 Aims and objectives

In partnership with parents and all members of our school community we aim to;

- Create a stimulating environment where every child can achieve their potential and has the opportunity to shine
- Provide every child with the essential skills and academic abilities to be a life long learner
- Equip every child with the skills and attitudes to make a positive contribution to our school and the wider community
- Ensure that every child knows how to live a healthy lifestyle through knowledge and awareness of diet, hygiene, social skills and exercise
- To equip every child with the skills to be able to stay safe in their daily lives, both in school and the wider community

We believe that people learn best in different ways. At our school, we provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows all children to develop their skills and abilities to 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 to build positive relationships with other people;
- Develop children's self-respect, encourage them to understand the ideas, attitudes and values of others, and teach them to respect other people's feelings;
- Show respect for a diverse range of cultures and, in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people;
- Enable children to understand their community, and help them feel valued as part of it;
- Help children grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens.

### 3 Effective learning

Research tells us that people learn in many different ways, and respond best to different types of input (visual, auditory and kinaesthetic); we must therefore deliver teaching in different ways to address the needs of all our learners. We take into account the different forms of intelligence (e.g. mathematical/logical, visual/spatial, interpersonal, musical) when planning our teaching.

We ensure the best possible environment for learning by developing a positive atmosphere in which pupils feel safe and feel they belong, in which they enjoy being challenged, but in which they enjoy learning, and know that they will succeed (because they know the challenge will have been set at the right level).

All teaching will be structured to maximise learning opportunities and lessons will be planned in accordance with the following principles:

- the teaching will build on previous learning ;
- it will give pupils the 'big picture' of the lesson;
- the teacher will share the learning objectives, and why the lesson is important;
- the lessons will be presented in a range of styles;
- learning will be differentiated to enable every child to make progress at their level;
- it will allow opportunities for the pupils to build up their own understanding through various activities;
- it will allow opportunities for the children to review what has been learnt;
- lessons will have a good pace and children should be active participants in each stage of the lesson;
- it will have built-in opportunities for children to assess what they have learnt (as well as adults), celebrating success and reviewing learning strategies;
- the teaching will indicate what the next step in the learning will be.

We offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways. These include:

- learning through play;
- investigation and problem-solving;
- research and discovery;
- group work;
- pair work;
- independent work;
- whole-class work;
- asking and answering questions;
- use of ICT;
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest;
- creative activities;
- watching film clips and responding to musical or recorded material;
- drama, debates, role-plays and oral presentations;
- designing and making things;
- visitors into school;
- participation in athletic or physical activity;
- whole school themes and topics.

We want our children to be excited and motivated to learn. We seek to inspire children as learners by;

- actively involving the children in planning and deciding on their learning;
- using the children's own interests, shared experiences and popular culture as starting points for learning;
- including a wide variety of activities, based upon first hand experience as far as possible, across all areas of the curriculum;
- providing exciting starting points for topics;
- encouraging children to ask questions, challenge and explore possibilities within their learning;
- ensuring that learning experiences are based upon the children's previous learning and that these links are made explicitly;
- making use of our local environment and community links, for example local industries and community members;
- delivering the curriculum in a variety of different ways; being flexible in our timetabling to ensure that learning can be organised in a way that best matches the activity. For example through theme weeks, one off day events or collapsing the curriculum and delivering units of work together;

- making cross curricular links wherever possible to make learning meaningful to children;
- using real life contexts and authentic resources and artefacts;
- holding whole school events and curriculum topics, from Nursery to Year Six which engage every child;
- encouraging children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way in which they learn, and to reflect on how they learn – what helps them learn, and what makes it difficult for them to learn;
- creating opportunities for children to have fun and laugh to ensure that learning is memorable;
- providing children with opportunities to reflect and experience quieter times within each day.

#### **4 Effective teaching and learning**

When we are teaching, we focus on motivating all the children, and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, so that they reach the highest level of personal achievement.

##### **Curriculum**

We use the school curriculum plan to guide our teaching. We organise our curriculum into themes for each half term. Across the school each half term has a curriculum focus and staff plan units of work around these making cross curricular links where possible, some subjects are taught discretely where more appropriate (see Appendix A). Our curriculum themes focus upon the foundation subjects of the national curriculum and staff make links to literacy and numeracy units of work (taken from the Primary Strategies) where meaningful links can be made.

We plan the curriculum in three stages;

- Long term plans set out the broad curriculum areas covered in each theme/half termly block and include all areas of the National Curriculum, or six areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. These ensure progression and continuity across the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stages.
- Medium term planning is based upon teacher's planning of units of work around a theme. Some National Curriculum subjects may be incorporated into a theme plan covering more than one subject. Other subjects which are taught more discretely will be in a single subject plan.

All of our medium term planning includes;

- An overview of how each theme will be taught showing links between each subject
- National Curriculum and Early Years Foundation Stage references
- Clear learning objectives for each specific lesson/activity, linked to the National Curriculum/Early Learning Goals
- How the lessons will be differentiated to meet the needs of all the children
- Resources required
- Assessment Opportunities (at the beginning, during a unit of work and at the end)

Medium term planning is reviewed and developed at least annually to ensure that teaching matches the needs of each cohort of children. Medium term plans will be annotated and reviewed throughout a unit of work to reflect teachers on going assessments. Where teachers use published schemes of work (for music or PE for

example) these are annotated to show how they have been adapted to meet the needs of the children in the class.

- Teachers write detailed weekly plans for the teaching of literacy (including specific planning for guided reading and writing sessions) and numeracy each week. They also keep records of what is taught each week in the foundation subjects and write specific lesson plans to support their medium term planning where required.

## **Assessment**

Teachers make ongoing assessments of each child's progress, and they use this information when planning their lessons (for further information see the school's Assessment Policy'). It enables them to take into account the abilities of all their children. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge and skills of all our children.

At the end of each unit of work we record summative assessments of children's levels of attainment against the core knowledge, skills and concepts that have been taught (see the Assessment and Subject Policies for more information about specific assessment records).

Staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage assess children's learning and development against all six areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage throughout the year. Within the Nursery, staff assess the children at termly intervals to assess whether they are working below, at, or above the age related expectations for each area of learning. Staff in the Reception class use the Foundation Stage profile to record their ongoing assessments and observations of each child's learning and development. These are based mainly upon child-initiated, independent play/learning.

Assessment records are also kept of children's levels of attainment against National Curriculum levels in core subjects; these are used to monitor the progress of individuals, groups and specific cohorts of children and inform future teaching and learning. We set academic targets for the children in each year, and we share these targets with children and their parents/carers. We review the progress of each child in the Spring term and at the end of the academic year, and set revised targets.

## **Inclusion**

We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability. Teaching and learning is differentiated in a variety of ways to ensure that every child makes good progress at his/her own level. This includes;

- differentiating the task through the level of support provided (for example using a writing frame to support less independent writers)
- providing the children with alternative ways of demonstrating their learning
- differentiating the task for different ability groups
- grouping the children in a variety of ways; for example ability groups, mixed ability groups or different pairings. Any groupings should be flexible and reflect the needs of the children based upon teacher's assessments for learning.
- providing pupils with differing levels of adult support
- providing specific teaching to meet the needs of groups of children within a class
- differentiating by providing different groups/individuals with separate tasks

When planning work for children with special educational needs, we give due regard to information and targets contained in the children's Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for children with disabilities. We value each child as a unique individual, and teachers are familiar with the relevant equal

opportunities legislation covering race, gender and disability. We will strive to meet the needs of all our children, and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements related to matters of inclusion.

Each of our teachers makes a special effort to establish good working relationships with all the children in the class. We treat the children with kindness and respect. We recognise that they are all individuals with different needs, but we treat them fairly, and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All of our teachers follow the school policy with regard to behaviour and discipline. We praise children for their efforts and, by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. We insist on good order and behaviour at all times. When children misbehave, we follow the guidelines for sanctions as outlined in our policy on behaviour.

We deploy Teaching Assistants and other adult helpers as effectively as possible. Sometimes, they work with individual children, and sometimes they work with small groups.

## **5 The learning environment**

Our classrooms are attractive learning environments. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and that an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources, which results in high-quality work by the children.

All children learn best when they have the right environment to work in, we seek to create this in our school by:

- establishing positive, happy and respectful relationships between adults and children;
- getting to know the children in our classes as individuals;
- establishing clear classroom routines and structures which support good behaviour (for example for handing out resources, moving around school or working in groups);
- ensuring that our classrooms are clean, tidy and well organised;
- ensuring that children can access resources independently;
- ensuring the learning environment is comfortable; e.g. the room is ambient temperature, has appropriate lighting and space to move around, and allowing children to drink water in class;
- ensuring that the environment and any activities are safe and pupils are not at risk from harm;
- changing the layout and organisation of the furniture to suit the activity;
- creating a quiet, purposeful noise level within the classroom which matches the activity;
- using high quality resources and materials which are clearly labelled and accessible to the children;
- creating high quality displays which are changed regularly and include all children's work from across the curriculum;
- making use of music to create different moods and to signal changes in activity.

At East Harling Primary School and Nursery classroom displays are changed regularly (at least half termly) and will include:

- key words and questions linked to units of work to promote thinking;

- mathematical displays, including the use of number lines throughout the school;
- the use of working walls (which are added to throughout units of work) to support children's learning and independent work;
- examples of pupils' high quality work carefully mounted and labelled to celebrate examples of excellence;
- displays of artefacts, resources and objects linked to the curriculum theme.

## **5 The role of governors**

Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school's approach to 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 used optimally to support teaching and learning;
- check teaching methods in the light of health and safety regulations;
- seek to ensure that our staff development and our performance management both promote good-quality teaching;
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning approaches through the school's self-review processes, which include reports from subject leaders, the annual headteacher's report to governors, and a review of the in-service training sessions attended by staff.

## **6 The role of parents and carers**

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

- by holding parents' evenings to explain our school strategies; for example for the teaching of phonics and reading, numeracy and sex education.
- by sending information to parents and carers, at the start of each term, which outlines the topics that the children will be studying during that term at school;
- by sending parents and carers regular reports in which we explain the progress made by each child, and indicate how the child can improve further;
- by explaining to parents and carers how they can support their children with homework, and suggesting, for example, regular shared reading with very young children, and support for older children with their projects and investigative work.

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

- to ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible;
- to ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and PE kit;
- to do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school;
- to inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour;
- to promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general;
- to fulfil the requirements set out in the home–school agreement.

## **7 Monitoring and review**

All of our teachers reflect on their strengths and weaknesses, and plan their professional development accordingly. We do all we can to support our teachers in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice.

We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all.

We are aware of the need to monitor the school's teaching and learning policy, and to review it regularly, so that we can take account of new initiatives and research, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school. We will therefore review this policy every two years, or earlier if necessary.

Date agreed by governors:

Review date: