



MARLBOROUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY

Introduction

Providing high quality learning experiences is the prime function of Marlborough Primary School. We recognise that this central purpose needs to be underpinned by excellence in teaching which facilitates necessary the engagement, motivation, support and challenge that our learners require to reach their potential.

Aims

- To maximise the rates of progress and the standards achieved by all our learners
- To ensure high expectations and promote excellence and enjoyment in learning in order to best prepare our pupils for their next stage of education and beyond
- To develop, maintain and deepen positive learning attitudes

Objectives

- To implement a broad, balanced, meaningful and relevant curriculum which delivers creative, thematic and problem based learning opportunities
- To help pupils develop the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding to become increasingly discerning, self-directed and life-long learners
- To maintain a central focus on the development of literacy and numeracy skills and the social and emotional aspects of learning
- To provide personalised learning experiences which meet the needs of pupils who may otherwise be vulnerable to underachievement
- To ensure that the recruitment, retention and professional development of the teaching staff is reflected in excellence in learning and teaching

Main Responsibilities

Governors

- Supporting and challenging the school's leadership in order to help recognise and acknowledge success and tackle weaknesses
- Using the school's performance data and monitoring opportunities to gain an accurate picture of how well pupils are achieving
- Approving and helping to ensure that the school aspirations and targets are achievable and sufficiently challenging
- Checking that the school meets its statutory responsibilities in terms of the implementation of National Curriculum requirements
- Understanding any barriers to learning and what the school is doing to overcome them
- Seeking the views of stakeholders and taking these into account when contributing to future planning
- Helping to enable the recruitment and retention of effective teachers
- Monitoring progress made in terms of the addressing priorities identified within the School Improvement Plan
- Approving and reviewing the policy on a bi-annual basis

Headteacher and the School's Leadership Team

- Establishing and communicating a shared understanding of high quality teaching
- Ensuring that effective learning and teaching is the central element of the school's shared vision for improvement and strategic planning
- Leading the development of the policy and managing its full implementation
- Providing ongoing opportunities for the continuing professional development of staff
- Determining the development of the curriculum including the consideration and/or implementation of innovative and creative learning opportunities

Headteacher and the School's Leadership Team - Continued

- Developing provision for extra and additional curricular opportunities
- Monitoring and evaluating the quality of learning and teaching throughout the school and reporting outcomes to stakeholders as appropriate
- Interrogating, analysing and evaluating school performance data including the benchmarking of outcomes as compared to local and national indicators with a view to identifying strengths and areas for development and setting achievable and challenging targets
- Holding all teachers to account in terms of meeting the Teaching Standards as set out by the Department of Education
- Ensuring all teachers receive a thorough appraisal of their performance according to school policy
- Taking appropriate prompt action in order to tackle any instances of underperformance and/or underachievement
- Using communication channels such as the school's website to ensure the publication of statutory and non-statutory information in respect to learning and teaching
- Seeking advice and support from the Local Authority and other agencies where appropriate

All Teaching Staff

- Maintaining high expectations of the learning potential of all pupils
- Planning, delivering and evaluating effective and focused learning using appropriate resources in accordance to school policy, agreed strategies and the published Teaching Standards
- Ensuring lessons engage, motivate, support and challenge the pupils, employ an appropriate range of learning styles and exploit opportunities provided by a variety of environments e.g. outdoor space
- Developing, maintaining and enhancing their own subject knowledge across all areas of the primary curriculum
- Monitoring the progress of the learners and ensuring that the development of learning opportunities best support their progress
- Reporting on the achievement, attainment and progress of the learners
- Helping to identify and tackle examples of underachievement
- Contribute to the development and implementation of specific learning interventions designed to meet the needs learning of pupils who have Special Educational Needs
- Providing a role model to pupils in terms of demonstrating positive learning attitudes and behaviours
- Ensuring that personal, social and emotional development remains at the core of their learning experience and that all learners and colleagues are treated with due sensitivity and respect
- Keeping abreast of salient educational initiatives and developments
- Employing organisational and teaching strategies and structures which help children to manage their own learning environment and provide opportunities for them to make appropriate choices with regard to activities and use of resources

Learners

- Conforming to the expectations of their teachers
- Participating positively to the learning process
- Showing determination and resilience

Parents and Carers

- Ensuring that their children attend school regularly and arrive on time
- Taking an active interest in and contributing to the development of their child's learning
- Supporting the inclusive learning ethos of the school as identified within the home/school agreement

Teaching Strategies

To ensure the effective delivery of learning activities teachers will be expected to employ a variety of appropriate strategies including:

- Instructing by communicating information in a structured way
- Demonstrating, such as the describing and/or modelling of activities
- Explaining and illustrating by giving accurate, well structured explanations, referring to previous learning, highlighting the meaning of related vocabulary and/or relevant steps towards the solution to a problem
- Questioning learners in ways that encourage feedback and the development of higher order thinking skills
- Facilitating discussion and independent and interdependent learning
- Consolidating by providing opportunities for learners to explain and applying skills, knowledge and understanding

Learning Environment

In accordance with our Health & Safety policy the school will do its utmost to provide a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all its members. This will include the use of learning venues outside the school premises for example those used on school trips and residential journeys. In addition, we also endeavour to exploit opportunities for developing learning outside of the classroom and ensure that all our learning environments are compatible with the specified activity. In order to facilitate this, the school will ensure designated areas for the teaching of particular subjects such as music, drama, PE and food technology. This may include partnerships with other schools and providers with a view to accessing specialist areas such as scientific laboratories and computer suites.

Organisation and Delivery

The delivery of learning and teaching activities will be undertaken through a range of differing organisational settings and delivered by appropriate teaching staff including subject and intervention specialists. This will typically include: whole class, mixed attainment or differentiated groupings based on criteria such as experience or current attainment, interventions for pupils who need additional support and/or challenge, specialist sessions such as music and PE and French and one to one tuition for learners who are otherwise vulnerable to underachievement. In addition, our Centre for children with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) provides opportunities for those learners to engage in individualised and multi-sensory programmes of learning.

In order to meet the needs of all the pupils, we recognise the value of providing an appropriate sequence of learning opportunities which enables learners to embed and apply knowledge and skills and deepen understanding. This will be considered and planned with regard to Bloom's Cognitive Taxonomy and described using terminology such as 'Knowing and Remembering,' 'Using and Applying' and 'Deepening Understanding'. Teachers will need to employ appropriate questioning strategies to support children's learning journey towards a greater depth of understanding.

As some children are likely to progress through their respective learning journey at different rates, some tasks may need to be differentiated in order to meet the needs of learners who are able to grasp skills, knowledge and understanding more rapidly or otherwise. Any such differentiation must only be used as means of helping pupils to progress along their respective learning journey at an appropriate pace. Teachers will therefore use differentiation in ways which enables pupils to progress towards the 'Using and Applying' or 'Deepening Understanding' phases of learning. Teachers will avoid using differentiated learning tasks in ways which imply or promote a fixed notion of ability e.g. setting.

Teachers will be responsible for ensuring that they promote children's independence and self-awareness of their own learning pathway. They will need to provide clear criteria from which the pupils can be encouraged to make appropriate choices about their engagement in a given activity according to the level of challenge. Flexible organisational structures will need to be employed to facilitate these opportunities and promote positive self-esteem and confidence. Where children are unable to make appropriate choices, the teachers will need to intervene to safeguard their progress.

Promoting Positive Learning Attitudes

All learners will be encouraged to develop and maintain positive learning characteristics where they understand that:

- Their capacity to gain knowledge, skills and understanding can be transformed through guidance, opportunity and practice
- Progress in learning is optimised when the experience is appropriately challenging
- Making and trying to address/fix errors is an important and necessary part of the learning process

All teachers will ensure that praise and recognition for the learners is given in direct proportion to the amount of effort and in response to positive learning behaviours such as determination, concentration and resilience. Teachers must avoid praising learners according to any criteria which implies a fixed notion of ability e.g. being smart, clever or talented.

Teachers will be responsible for challenging pupils, parents/carers and /or colleagues who have developed unfounded attitudes and/or beliefs in respect of the learning potential of any individual or group based on criteria such as gender, cultural background, perceived gifts/talents or otherwise and any notion of fixed intelligence/ability.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The ongoing monitoring of learning and teaching will be developed as an integral part of the strategic leadership and management systems of the school. This will include formal and informal opportunities to observe lessons, scrutinise pupil's recorded outcomes, engage in dialogue with teachers and learners and assess progress against agreed success criteria and in light of available performance data. In addition relevant Local Authority officers, Headteacher colleagues and experts from other agencies will be used to support the process as appropriate.

The quality of learning and teaching will be deemed to be of high quality i.e. at least good, when we find the learners:

- With a clear understanding of lesson activities
- Highly motivated and actively engaged in appropriately challenging learning experiences
- Responding positively to a range of open/closed questions which reflect consideration of Bloom's Taxonomy
- Taking pride in their learning and responding positively to praise and encouragement
- Learning at an appropriate pace and sustaining concentration
- Drawing on prior knowledge, understanding/experiences to support their learning
- Learning equally well in differing groups
- Experiencing opportunities to make decisions about their learning
- Generating, expressing and exploring their own questions and ideas
- Applying learning and thinking skills to a range of meaningful, cross- curricular and practical situations
- Using ICT as an effective tool for learning
- Accessing their learning through a range of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic approaches
- Receiving effective support from teaching assistants and other adult helpers
- Producing good quality outcomes
- Evaluating and demonstrating their own progress in learning
- Striving to meet or exceed their teacher's expectations and/or learning targets
- Showing awareness of how the learning will develop the following sessions
- Securing rates of progress and levels of attainment appropriate to their age, learning potential and individual needs

Addressing Achievement Gaps

Where an achievement gap between specific groups of pupils has been identified at class and whole school level will need to be employed with the objective to close any such gap.

Such a process may involve:

- The planning and delivery of specified learning interventions
- Reasonable adjustments to the curriculum in order to meet the needs of the learners
- The procurement of additional resources including staff
- Rigorous monitoring of the impact of any of the strategies/interventions employed
- Other necessary internal/external support including professional development opportunities
- Liaison with other schools/agencies in order to identify and learn from best practice

Inclusion, Equal Opportunities and Personalisation

In accordance with the school's Inclusion Policy all members of the school community will have unique contributions to make, which may be derived of or expressive of their gender, physical, emotional and/or learning needs, sexuality, ethnic, cultural, religious, social and economic backgrounds. These contributions and differences should be used to enrich the learning experiences of the whole group and promote an inclusive educational setting but never to restrict access or opportunity. Teachers will endeavour to deliver effective learning experiences for all pupils. We recognise that this will not necessarily mean treating all children 'equally' or result in every child achieving the same way. The promotion of equal opportunities and inclusion focuses on tackling barriers to learning in order that all pupils can fulfil their potential.

Cross Curricular Links

We are committed to the principle of ensuring that all learning opportunities are underpinned by purpose and meaning. This will be cultivated through our learning themes and teachers will be expected to identify appropriate cross-curricular links to ensure that learning experiences are as engaging and motivating as possible and maximise pupils potential for making progress, for example the development of writing skills through an historical, geographical or scientific context.

Extra and Additional Curricular Links including Homework

The school will continue to provide opportunities to develop varied and relevant learning opportunities through appropriate trips and visits including the use of specialist providers who may be available to support activities in the school. These will be linked to the learning context of the various year groups. The staff in each year group will be responsible for planning, delivering and evaluating at least one of these activities each term and for ensuring all necessary risk assessments have been completed.

Our designated lead for extended schools will be responsible for leading the development of extra curricular clubs and activities according to availability and the appropriate needs and wishes of the children and parents/carers. We will also seek to provide a balanced menu of provision and target the involvement of vulnerable pupils. In addition the school will seek to become involved in activities and competitions organised with and between other schools.

In accordance with our homework policy and guidance, the school will provide opportunities which aim to:

- Match the activity to the ages and abilities of the children
- Reinforce and extend learning that have taken place in school
- Encourage self-motivation, self-reliance and responsibility
- Develop organisational skills and independence
- Stimulate enjoyment and foster interest and strengthen the links between home and school
- Establish good routines in readiness for transfer to the next class or school

Assessment for Learning

Assessing, recording and reporting on the pupils' progress, achievements and attainment is an integral part of successful learning and teaching. Assessment reveals the knowledge, understanding, skills and concepts children have acquired and enables teachers to make informed decisions about future learning experiences which can best meet the needs of pupils. Assessment also plays a vital role in identifying those pupils who require special provision, for example those with Special Educational Needs and/or those who have English as an Additional Language.

Assessment for Learning - Continued

In accordance with our Assessment for Learning Policy, teachers will be responsible for ensuring that they:

- Use assessment strategies is an integral part of planning, teaching and learning
- Facilitate a clear understanding of success criteria among the learners
- Manage feedback in a sensitive and constructive way which ensures that learners know how to improve
- Develop the capacity of children to engage in successful self and peer assessment activities
- Provide recognition of all educational achievements

In addition the marking of learners recorded outcomes should try to:

- Provide acknowledgement and praise for pupils' efforts and achievements
- Identify limitations and make recommendations for improvement
- Focus on specific outcomes connected to the learning objective
- Reflect the needs of individual pupils
- Encourage pupil responses and a deepening of their understanding
- Exploit opportunities for developing literacy and numeracy skills

Continuing Professional Development

The school is committed to the professional development of its staff and will use a range of strategies to ensure that this aspect of school improvement has a significant impact on the outcomes achieved by our learners within the capacity of the school's resources.

These include:

- Delivery of regular school based INSET linked with the school's improvement priorities
- Use of the performance management processes to identify and plan for the professional development of individual teachers and teaching assistants
- Access to appropriate courses and meetings organised and delivered by external providers including the Local Authority
- Opportunities to engage in learning opportunities with colleagues within and beyond the school including leading teachers
- Dissemination of relevant and salient educational initiatives and developments

Conclusion

The school is determined to ensure that our pupils' chances of educational success are not restricted by their socio-economic background, gender or ethnicity. It is therefore imperative that learning and teaching opportunities meet the needs of the individual and are underpinned by an expectation that all learners will achieve high standards. Central to these aspirations is the development of learners in terms of the key skills in English and mathematics, an understanding of how to learn, think creatively, take risks and manage change. Teachers have a responsibility to use their skills and knowledge to engage children as partners in learning, act quickly to adjust their teaching when necessary and to encourage the contribution of parents/carers as their child's co-educators.