

# Teaching and Learning Policy

At Wild Bank Community School, we are committed to high quality teaching and learning to raise standards of achievement for all children. All teachers and governors have been consulted in developing this policy, which summarises expectations and common working practices. It reflects what has been agreed in terms of approach and consistency and makes explicit the best practice to which the school aspires. It also reflects the aims and objectives of the school and supports our vision.

At Wild Bank Community School, we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the idea that both children and adults continue to learn new things every day throughout the course of their lives. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone. Through our teaching we aim to 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.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our subject policies.

## **PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING**

Learning is the purpose of the whole school and is a shared commitment. At Wild Bank Community School, we recognise that education involves children, parents, staff, governors, the community and the local authority, and that for optimum benefit all should work closely together to support the process of learning. At our school we aim to provide a rich and varied learning experience that empowers children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential.

Working in partnership, we aim to:

- enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners;
- provide a supportive, positive, healthy, caring and safe environment, which has high expectations and values all members of the school community;
- recognise the needs and aspirations of all individuals and provide opportunities for all pupils to make the best possible progress and attain the highest personal achievements;
- ensure children can develop as literate, numerate and technologically competent individuals, within a broad, balanced, exciting and challenging curriculum;
- aspire to the highest possible standards of attainment for all children;
- encourage all children to be enthusiastic and committed learners, promoting their self-esteem, self-worth and emotional well-being;
- develop individuals with lively, enquiring minds, good thinking skills, self-respect, self-discipline and positive attitudes;
- give pupils the skills they require to become effective lifelong learners;
- give pupils the values they require to become respectful 21<sup>st</sup> century citizens;
- provide an inclusive education for all pupils;
- 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, to promote positive attitudes towards others;
- enable children to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this community;
- help children grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens;

- learn from each other, through the adoption of a collaborative, enquiry based approach;
- enable teachers to teach as effectively as possible .

As a school, we are committed to our mission statement: ***working together we can achieve our best.***

Our overall aim is to develop children who are effective, kind and considerate, prepared for education and life beyond Wild Bank. Our achievement culture is integral to our success as a school. This policy outlines the elements which are key to raising standards in teaching and learning and the broad structure for lessons, based on best practice and research linked to how we best learn. However, it is important to remember that through this model, teachers should still bring their own creativity and imagination to the classroom.

### **Effective learning**

Through this policy we aim to ensure that children learn effectively. The characteristics of effective learning are when pupils make good progress in gaining new knowledge, understanding and skills, respond well to challenging tasks and adjust well to working in different contexts. To be effective learners, children need to work in a sustained manner with commitment and enjoyment, be confident in raising questions and have perseverance when answers are not readily available. Also, children need to be able to select appropriate methods, organise the resources they need effectively and then evaluate their own work. When appropriate, they also need to collaborate and work together.

### **Learning Processes and Learning Styles**

Children enter school at different stages of development. Children learn in different ways and at different rates of progress. At our school, we provide a rich and varied learning environment that enables all children to develop their skills and abilities to reach their full potential. In the course of learning, children develop their skills through a variety of processes and learning styles. These include:

- investigation;
- experimentation;
- listening;
- observation;
- collaboration;
- risk-taking;
- challenging;
- talking and discussion;
- asking questions;
- child-initiated play;
- practical exploration and role play;
- retrieving information;
- imagining;
- repetition;
- problem-solving;
- making choices and decision-making.

At Wild Bank Community School, opportunities are organised to give pupils access to these processes, and for them to develop their own strategies to gain knowledge and skills. We aim to provide opportunities to develop a wide range of learning styles. We recognise that each child has a unique way of learning and that learning preference is affected by previous experience, competence, confidence, beliefs and values. We shall ensure that learning is accessed by as many means as possible, e.g. VAK. (Visual, auditory and kinesthetic). Staff are aware of a range of theories and research linked to learning including encouraging a 'Growth Mindset'.

Planning will incorporate as many styles of working as possible. These styles include:

- individual learning;
- collaborative learning in small groups, or pairs;
- one to one learning with an adult, or more able pupil;
- whole class;
- independent learning.

This will look like:

- investigation and problem-solving;
- research and discovery;
- work together in a group or pair;
- independent work;
- whole-class work;
- asking and answering questions;
- innovative pupil-led use of ICT;
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest;
- guest speakers (experts within a particular field);
- creative activities;
- responding to a range of media (including video footage, music, podcasts);
- debates, role-plays and oral presentations;
- designing and making things;
- participation in athletic or physical activity.

From - What does learning actually look like?

Group work may include friendship, matched ability, mixed ability, etc, appropriate to the activity. Collaborative learning is encouraged, although some periods of the day may be set aside for silent work.

### **Engaging the learner**

We maximize the learning opportunities in a variety of ways. These often include playing music to accompany learning, providing 'brain breaks' at various points in the lesson to refocus children's attention, and make sure that the children have access to drinking water.

Each of our teachers makes a special effort to establish good working relationships with all the children in the class, because without this meaningful relationship, learning can be restricted. 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 discipline and classroom management.

### **Active Pupil Engagement**

Pupils are actively engaged throughout all parts of the lesson through questioning, oracy and collaborative learning structures. Teachers take into account pupil's concentration span and ensure pupils are not sitting passively for long periods

Blooms Taxonomy is used to support high level questioning, higher order thinking and to support 'task' difficulty

Opportunities to think/pair/share and discussions with a talk partner are regular features of lessons.

## The Learning Journey

All teaching and learning is carefully planned in order that:

- the learning must build on previous learning;
- it should give pupils the 'big picture' of the lesson;
- the teacher should explain the learning objectives, success criteria and *why* the lesson is important;
- the lesson should be presented in a range of styles (visual, audio, kinesthetic);
- it should allow opportunities for the pupils to build up their own understanding through various **activities**;
- it should allow opportunities for the children to **review** what has been learnt;
- it should have built-in opportunities for **feedback** to the children, **celebrating** success and **reviewing** learning strategies;
- the teaching should indicate what the **next step** in the learning will be.

## The Learning Environment and resources

Classroom environment and resources merged with The learning Environment

All children have a right to work in a tidy, well-organised classroom. The classroom is organised to facilitate learning and the development of independence. This often requires flexibility in the organisation of furniture. Fully inclusive classroom environments can both support and enrich the learning of all children. As well as being vibrant and welcoming, the classroom environment can be a learning tool, a way of engaging children and building the class community. It can create a sense of ownership and be used to support and promote learning as well as celebrating children's work. With careful thought and planning, an effective classroom environment is used as an interactive resource supporting teaching, learning and assessment.

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. Resources around the room (e.g. a writing display on 'recounts') can help scaffold learning, serving as a supplement to success criteria (see our Feedback and Marking Policy).

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).

Our classrooms are attractive learning environments. We change displays, so that the classroom reflects the topics studied by the children. We ensure that all children have the opportunity to display their best work at some time during the year. All classrooms have a range of dictionaries and of both fiction and non-fiction books, as well as displays relating to literacy and numeracy. We also use displays as learning prompts for the children.

Classroom and central resources are the responsibility of all staff and subject leaders who ensure that:

- there is a range of appropriate, accessible and labelled resources available for which pupils can select materials suitable to the task in hand;
- all children know where classroom resources are kept and the rules about their access and use;
- children are encouraged to act independently in choosing, collecting and returning resources where appropriate;
- the library is a valued resource and used appropriately;
- children work together to establish an attractive, welcoming and well organised environment engendering respect, care and value for all resources.

- In Nursery, Reception and Year 1 classes, areas for imaginative play change regularly, to give opportunities for a range of play and role-play.
- In EYFS, the outside area is planned for and used as an extension of the classroom.
- Children have access to drinking water.

Each classroom will be equipped with a basic set of resources and books appropriate to the age range. Specialist resources will be stored in the appropriate curriculum resource cupboard/area, and will be regularly audited by the subject leaders. Consumables will be replenished as necessary. Staff may contact subject leaders with suggestions for specialist materials which may need ordering.

Pupils will be taught how to use all resources correctly and safely, with care and respect and with regard for Health and Safety and waste. Care will be taken to ensure that resources reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of our society, and that all pupils have equality of access.

At Wild Bank Community School the use of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum is valued and these are used throughout the school to widen children's experiences and support learning across a range of subject areas.

Time is a resource that we value. To maximise its use:

- as children progress throughout the school they are encouraged to take greater control of their own learning, including their use of time;
- opportunities for learning are maximised by ensuring that tasks are made specific by focused objectives;
- teachers will encourage pupils to work within given time scales, and will facilitate the effective use of time through the provision of appropriate resources and planning extension activities;
- all children engage in useful activities upon entering the classroom and know what to do between the end of an activity and the end of a session.

Computing is a major resource, which is used across the whole curriculum. Its application and use is developed in our different subject policies.

### **Use of Technology to Enhance Learning**

- Technology is used as a learning tool to aid learning e.g. at the start and end of a lesson
- Technology is used to enhance learning where ever possible e.g. use of tablets (photos, videoing) laptops, computers, programming devices etc
- Highly visible across the classroom
- Wi-Fi across the school grounds allows for the use of technology both inside and outside the school building

### **Key Elements of Effective Teaching**

#### **Clear Learning Objectives**

- Learning Objectives are shared orally and displayed in child friendly language
- Pupils stick or write their learning objective in their book
- The context of the lesson should reflect the learning objective
- When marking pupil's work the main focus is on meeting the learning objective

#### **Clear Success Criteria**

- All pupils are clear about how they will achieve the learning objective
- Success Criteria are displayed for the pupils to follow during the lesson or drawn up with the pupils as

steps to success

- Planning includes success criteria for each learning objective which is displayed on the Interactive Smart Board
- Pupils use the success criteria to assess their own work or their partner's work
- Pupils are reminded of the success criteria during the lesson – often pupil's work is used to illustrate the success criteria in action

### **Clear Differentiation**

So that we always have the highest possible expectations of individual learners and so they can demonstrate what they can do, understand and achieve, teachers will differentiate the curriculum according to individual needs by: pace, content; task, relevance, resources, extension, autonomy, outcome, teacher/adult support.

Differentiated tasks will be detailed in weekly planning and “matching provision to needs” notes. Learning objectives will be specified for all differentiated teaching and reference will be made in weekly plans to Pen Portraits/ Individual Education Plans where appropriate.

- All pupils are challenged appropriately
- Planning shows clear differentiation (LA, MA, HA)
- To encourage Inclusion, learning objective should be the same for all pupils but may be slightly adapted along with the use of materials/resources to ensure access for all
- There is a mix of mastery tasks that can be mastered by all learners in a short period of time regardless of prior learning or ability and greater depth tasks that stretch the more able develop the skills required for academic success, and the world of work. These create deep learning - real understanding.

### **Clear communication and lesson structure**

Teacher behaviours and language in the classroom are critical to children's learning. How the teacher communicates with the children is a major influence on each child's response, understanding and attitude. The lesson structure influences the effectiveness of the learning opportunities and the balance between the different learning activities (see Learning Processes and Learning Styles previously).

The teachers communicate with the children through:-

- exposition;
- explanation;
- demonstration;
- instruction and
- direction.

They need to be clearly articulated, understandable by the children and focused on the needs of the learning activity.

Lesson structure and classroom management are also critical. They should be:-

- consistent;
- support the pace of the lesson;
- appropriate to the learning activity and
- allow the children to maximize their time on the activity.

### **Consistent classroom management signals**

Clear management signals are designed to minimise the time spent on behaviour management and maximise the time spent on learning. Each class will have an agreed signal.

The attention signal (a raised hand, chant or clapping a rhythm, tambourine etc) is non-verbal and used

to stop the class and get everyone's attention for something purposeful. It should not be used just as a tool to quieten down the class. The expectation is that all pupils will stop what they are doing, remain quiet, pay attention and look at the speaker to listen to a purposeful and meaningful instruction.

### **Inclusion**

[See our *Inclusion Policy*], but in summary, we plan learning with vulnerable pupils at the forefront and we **scaffold** the learning for every child at whatever level they are working at.

### **Clear Feedback**

- Our Marking, Feedback and Presentation Policy is embedded in everyday practice and is used to inform teaching and learning
- All pupils are clear about how they need to improve
- Marking is linked to the learning objectives and identifies next steps
- Pupils are given time to address issues raised in marking and engage in dialogue with the teacher if appropriate – reflection or fix it time.

### **Marking and Feedback**

Across our school, we think of marking in terms of feedback about a child's work. This feedback may take a number of forms - oral, written, formal and informal – and may be given on a group basis as well as an individual one. The nature of marking influences and encourages the child and gives her/him the confidence to take another learning step.

Details of what is expected in all classrooms and books can be found in our Marking, Feedback and Presentation Policy.

In brief:

- **Green pen** is used to mark books and comment on 'what worked well' and what could be done next to make it even better, or a question to take learning further and challenge. Feedback identifies 'How will this improve their learning?'
- **Purple pen** is used by the pupils to respond to the action point at the start of each lesson, 'The Purple Pen of Progress'. Reflection and Fix it time will last no longer than 10 minutes. There is an expectation, as class teacher/teaching assistant, to revisit the action point to ensure the pupil has responded. This is indicated by C
- Pupils are praised for their efforts and achievements using praise stickers or comments and house points if appropriate
- Adults mark as much as possible with pupils alongside them.
- Books are used as learning journals where mistakes are used as discussion points and editing and redrafting is a familiar process. Dialogue with the child
- Where pupils have self/peer assessed, teachers indicate if they agree with the self/peer assessment
- Marking and feedback follows the marking code

### **Pupil Books**

All learning is evidenced and referenced in pupil exercise books to show the learning journey and to show the progress that has taken place, through: English, mathematics, topic (science, humanities, and RE etc). The evidence can be in the form of photographs with supporting statements from the pupils or adults, brief explanation of activities that have not involved any written recording, assessment tasks, photocopies of collaborative learning tasks etc.

## **Homework**

Homework is considered to be a valuable element of the learning process. (See Homework Policy)

At Wild Bank Community School, we use homework and half term tasks to encourage parents to work with their children at home. Children are expected to take pride in their work and keep their homework neat, but they can be as creative as they like and present their work in a style which they prefer. Additional, more formal activities may be set by the teacher depending on the needs of the children.

We believe that homework should be set:

- to involve parents in their children's learning;
- to help parents/carers keep abreast of what their child can and cannot do;
- to take advantage of the home context to apply learning;
- to encourage children to talk about their work to their parents/carers and explain what they are doing and how;
- to extend the time for learning, thus enabling children to practise and consolidate their skills and knowledge and strategies;
- to prepare children for secondary school experiences of homework;
- to view learning as a lifelong process and not just restricted to school hours.

The school's agreed practice for homework is that:

- homework is set on a regular basis, for all years, in line with our homework policy;
- homework will generally follow on from work which has taken place in class but may take many different forms, including reading, learning multiplication facts and spellings. It should not entail new ideas that require explanation from a teacher;
- homework may sometimes consist of preparation for work yet to be done;
- children should understand exactly what they are expected to do, how to do it, and how long it should take;
- homework should sometimes involve the participation of the parents/carers;
- children who have made insufficient effort during class time may occasionally be asked to complete work at home.

## **Planning**

At Wild Bank Community School we are committed to following the programmes of study as required by the National Curriculum 2014. A cycle of National Curriculum Programmes of Study is drawn up by staff and is carefully balanced to ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum, PSHCE and RE. We follow a cross curricular approach to learning where some subjects are taught through a topic and some are covered as discrete subjects. Regular staff and phase meetings are used to discuss various aspects of the curriculum and ensure consistency of approach and standards.

Planning takes place half-termly, with reference to the National Curriculum 2014, Early Years Foundation Stage and the Whole School Long Term Curriculum Plan. Swimming instruction with specialist teachers takes place at the local swimming pool.

Our curriculum is carefully designed to ensure coverage and progression in knowledge, understanding and skills of all children, whatever their starting points. In addition to diverse and rich opportunities from which children can learn and develop a range of transferable skills, it provides pupils with memorable experiences, fostering a sense of awe and wonder. For example within each History unit we



have chosen to explore five areas: technology, government, morality, religion and wellbeing, health and hygiene. It is our intention to develop children's vocabulary, link their learning and build on their existing knowledge to extend and widen their skills, concepts, attitudes and understanding. Children will consider conscious connections, contrasts and trends over time and develop the appropriate use of historical terminology.

Opportunities for longitudinal learning will be planned as appropriate. Teacher will be mindful of natural disasters and world events as opportunities for the children to consolidate and extend their knowledge, skills and understanding. This is particularly useful as a means of finding geographical locations, researching facts and enriching the children's experiences.

A primary focus of our curriculum is to raise aspirations, engender a sense of personal pride in achievement, ensure the highest possible attainment for all pupils and provide a purpose and relevance for learning.

Wild Bank Community School has developed a planning book for half-term units and weekly plans for English, Mathematics and foundation subjects based upon previous assessment data, pupil need and subject expectation. Curriculum time can be planned as continuous study throughout the half term, or as blocks of study. We are committed to raising standards of basic skills. By basic skills, we mean the ability to read, write and speak in English and to use Mathematics at a proficient level to facilitate learning across the curriculum.

Subject leaders play an important part in the success of the curriculum by leading a regular programme of monitoring, evaluation and review. This curriculum design ensures that the needs of individual and small groups of children can be met within high quality first teaching, supported by targeted, proven interventions where appropriate. In this way it can be seen to impact in a very positive way on pupil outcomes. Enjoyment of the curriculum promotes achievement, confidence and good behaviour. Children feel safe to try new things and take risks.

Pupils who are still working on the Early Learning Goals of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum as they enter Year 1. There is a period in the Autumn Term where the majority of children progress to the National Curriculum.

**Record-keeping and Assessment:** regular summative and formative assessments establish the level of children's attainment and track their progress. These assessments are used to inform future planning. Record-keeping and assessment procedures are defined in the Assessment Policy and Marking and Presentation Policy. Assessments are recorded in systems such as SIMs and Classroom Monitor. (This assessment system is currently being reviewed by the SLT). Progress is analysed regularly by class teachers, phase leaders and the assessment leader.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

### **Staff**

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

**Parents/carers are encouraged to support their child's learning by:**

- ensuring that their child comes to school feeling confident and positive.
- ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, well-rested and in good health;
- ensuring that their child arrives at school wearing the correct uniform and bringing necessary equipment;
- providing support for the discipline within the school;
- supporting the work of educational targets and becoming actively involved in the implementation of any interventions;
- participating in discussions concerning their child's progress and attainment;
- ensuring early contact with school to discuss matters which affect a child's happiness, progress and behavior at a mutually convenient time;
- support the school's homework policy and give due importance to any homework;
- ensuring that all contact addresses and telephone numbers are up to date and correct;
- allowing their child to become increasingly independent as they progress throughout the school;
- informing the school of reasons for their child's absence;
- actively supporting the Home-School Agreement.
- supporting extra-curricular activities, such as clubs, visits, workshops and assemblies.

**Pupils are encouraged to support the school's aims by:**

- attending school in good health, maintained by adequate diet, exercise and sleep;
- attending school regularly and punctually;
- being organised, bringing necessary equipment, taking letters home promptly, etc;
- conducting themselves in an orderly manner in line with the expected behaviour policy;
- taking increased responsibility for their own learning.

**The community is invited to support the school by:**

- contributing to activities, such as assemblies, specialist outings, clubs, etc;
- presenting themselves as positive role models to be emulated;
- organising activities and events throughout the year to extend and deepen pupils' knowledge and skills;
- supporting school events;
- voluntarily helping in the classroom.

**Governors' Role:** it is the Governors' role to monitor and review the policy and its practice through:

- Undertaking regular visits to oversee the delivery of their designated subject.
- Attending termly meetings of the Curriculum and Standards Committee.
- Receiving reports from the Head Teacher, Inclusion Lead and subject leaders including Quality assurance summaries.
- Monitoring the implementation of subject development plans.
- Attending INSET.
- Promoting and ensuring equal opportunities in relation to race, gender, class and belief.
- Promoting and ensuring the practice of giving value and respect for all cultures and faiths.

**Subject leaders have a variety of roles.** These include:

- taking the lead in policy development and the production of schemes of work designed to ensure progression and continuity in their subject throughout the school;
- supporting colleagues in their development and implementation of the scheme of work, and in assessment and record-keeping activities;
- monitoring progress in their subjects and advising the Head Teacher on action needed;
- taking responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central resources for their subjects;
- using release time to support colleagues;
- keeping up-to-date through reading and attending relevant courses.
- reporting to Governors on the implementation of subject development plans.

Teachers ensure breadth and balance to the curriculum and endeavour to make use of cross curricular opportunities to enhance learning.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Children's written work is monitored against the Marking and Presentation Policy regularly. Feed back to teachers and targets are set.
- Subject leaders and SLT sample children's work to ensure consistency.
- The Head Teacher observes NQTs teach approximately three times a year, alongside their NQT mentor.
- Performance management team leaders observe all teachers/support staff as part of the PM process.
- Subject leaders observe teaching to identify strengths and areas for development in their subject.
- Demonstration lessons and peer observations are arranged where appropriate.

**Lesson Observations:** as part of the performance management process, teachers and support staff are observed teaching during lessons, at three times during the year and more often if required. Written and verbal feedback is given. The school believes that in order to continue to raise standards in the school, teaching needs to be good or better, overtime. For the criteria to determine what good or better teaching looks like, please refer to the Ofsted Handbook.