



Ombersley Endowed First School

Policy on Learning and Teaching

1 Introduction

- 1.1 At Ombersley School, we believe in the concept of lifelong learning, and in the idea that both adults and children learn new things every day and this should be celebrated. We also believe that learning takes place when children are interested and motivated through rewarding and enjoyable experiences and therefore learning should be meaningful and 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

- 2.1 We aim to give the children in our school high quality learning experiences that lead to a consistently high level of pupil achievement. We believe that people learn best in different ways. At our school, we endeavour to provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows all children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential.
- 2.2 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 creativity, a spirit of enquiry, and thinking skills;
 - 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;
 - develop a 'can do' culture, that promotes risk-taking;
 - 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

- 3.1 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 try to take into account the different forms of intelligence (e.g. mathematical/logical, visual/spatial, interpersonal, musical) when planning our teaching.
- 3.2 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). We sometimes play music to accompany learning, provide 'brain breaks' at various points in the lesson to refocus children's attention, and make sure that the children have access to drinking water.
- 3.3 All teaching will be structured to maximise learning opportunities, and lessons will be planned in accordance with the following principles:

- the teaching should build on previous learning, so we activate prior knowledge and understanding and connect 'new' learning to what children already know and understand;
- it should give pupils the 'big picture' of the lesson and 'hook the children in' within the first five minutes which is when the potential for learning is at its greatest;
- the teacher should explain the learning objectives, and why the lesson is important and also what the learning will look like and how the learner will know if they are successful;
- the lesson should be presented in a range of styles;
- 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 and the effectiveness of how they learned and how their approach could be adjusted;
- 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.

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

- 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 television and responding to musical or tape-recorded material;
- debates, role-plays and oral presentations;
- designing and making things;
- participation in athletic or physical activity.

3.5 We encourage 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.

3.6 As part of our focus on Reasoning and Dialogue across the curriculum we have developed a system of Learning Partners, chosen at random and changed regularly (e.g. weekly or fortnightly). We encourage the Learning Partners to discuss and share their learning. They may be asked to respond to questions following this discussion. They may also be encouraged to develop questions of their own.

4 Effective teaching and learning

4.1 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. We use the school curriculum plan to guide our teaching. This sets out the aims, objectives and values of the school, and details what is to be taught to each year group.

4.2 Teachers make ongoing assessments of each child's progress, and they use this information when planning their lessons. 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. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability.

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.

- 4.3 We set and review academic and social or developmental targets with all the children in Key Stages 1 and 2, and we share these targets with their parents. We also set levelled targets for literacy and numeracy which are reviewed and revised regularly and predict the level to be achieved by each child at the end of the academic year. These are recorded on the school's tracking systems and enable us to put in appropriate interventions, support or challenge when children are not making the expected level of progress with quality first teaching.
- 4.4 We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives. We take these objectives from the National Curriculum. Our lesson plans contain information about the tasks to be set, the resources needed, and the way in which we assess the children's work. We evaluate lessons, so that we can modify and improve our future teaching.
- 4.5 Each of our teachers 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 classroom management. Routines and rules contribute to a healthy learning environment and should be consistently enforced. In order to be effective these should be kept to a minimum, and should be fair, realistic and positive and agreed with the children. We therefore set and agree with children the class code of conduct, and we expect all children to comply with the rules that we jointly devise to promote the best learning opportunities for all. 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.
- 4.6 We try to ensure that all tasks and activities that the children perform are safe. When we plan to take children out of school, we follow a strict set of procedures to ensure safety: the venue is visited, risk assessments are completed, and various permissions are obtained. We inform parents, and obtain their permission, before the visit takes place.
- 4.7 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. Our adult helpers also assist with the preparation and storage of classroom equipment and with displays.
- 4.8 Our classrooms are attractive and stimulating learning environments. We change displays at least once a term, 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 both fiction and non-fiction books, as well as displays relating to literacy and numeracy. We also use displays as working walls which provide learning prompts for the children. 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.
- 4.9 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.
- 4.10 We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all.

5 The Learning Environment

- 5.1 This should be organised to ensure that children have the opportunity to:
- work individually, with Learning Partners, in groups and as a class;
 - make decisions;
 - work co-operatively;
 - solve problems;
 - be creative;
 - discuss their ideas;
 - develop social skills;
 - develop independence;
 - use initiative;
 - receive support;
 - achieve academically.

- 5.2 Learning takes place in an environment which:

- is challenging and stimulating;
- is peaceful and calm;
- is happy and caring;
- is organised;
- is well-resourced;
- makes learning accessible;
- is encouraging and rewarding;
- is welcoming;
- provides equal opportunities.

6 Achievement

- 6.1 Social, physical creative and academic achievements are celebrated in many ways as an on-going process in all aspects of school life, by:
- Verbal or written praise by teachers, peers, headteacher and parents;
 - Displays of work;
 - Opportunities to perform or share;
 - Encouraging self-esteem;
 - The awarding of stickers, house points or certificates;
 - Sharing success with the community.

7 The role of governors

- 7.1 Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school's approach to learning and teaching. 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 headteacher's reports to governors, and a review of the in-service training sessions attended by staff.

8 The role of parents

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

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

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

- 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 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.

9 Monitoring and review

9.1 We monitor the school's learning and teaching policy, and review it regularly to 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 at S.I.D. Committee. Regular monitoring of Teaching and Learning takes place via the School Development Plan.

Signed: *C Moore*

Date: April 2016

Review Date: Summer 2018