

# Sullivan School Teaching and Learning Policy



Written Autumn Term 2013



## Teaching and Learning Policy

### Sullivan Primary School

**'Creating a passion for lifelong learning'**



#### **Purpose**

The policy for teaching and learning is a core policy of the school and informs the best classroom practice. It will enable all children to make progress in every lesson taught and will ultimately raise standards. Members of staff are expected to refer to it frequently and use it to help evaluate and tweak practice to ensure the best provision for our children.

#### **Rationale**

At Sullivan Primary School we strive to develop an inclusive community of learners who seek the learning potential in everyday situations. We believe that learning is a lifelong process and that all members of the school community play an active role in this process.

We recognise that the quality of teaching at Sullivan Primary School will make a huge impact on the quality of learning for our children. We strive to provide the highest standards of teaching at all times – recognising the role we play in shaping the attitudes towards learning of individuals. We also believe that through furthering our own learning by understanding about the process of how children learn and reflecting on how to further improve our teaching, we will continue to develop lifelong learners. Assessment for learning lies at the heart of this process.

#### **Aims**

Through high quality teaching, we aim to ensure that all children have exciting, relevant and challenging learning experiences.

We recognise that **children learn best** when:

- They feel confident about what they are doing.
- They feel secure and in control.
- Their surroundings are lively and interesting to them.
- They can connect a new experience to what has gone on before.
- They have clear purposes and real reasons for learning.
- They know what is expected of them.
- They have time to think and talk about their experiences.
- They have access to a range of suitable resources.
- They feel that they are making progress and can assess their own achievements.
- They are able to work together as well as on their own.
- Their tasks are well matched to their needs and interests.
- They can make decisions about what they have to do.
- They have appropriate adult supervision and instruction.
- They are encouraged to ask questions of one another and the teacher.
- They know what they have to do to improve.
- They have time and opportunity to reflect on their learning.

In order for **high quality teaching** to occur, teachers will:

- Recognise that children learn in different ways (visual, auditory, physical, etc) and provide a range of learning and teaching opportunities to reflect this
- Be explicit about the aims and purposes of lessons and learning activities; and be clear about where these fit into the overall scheme of work or topic (this includes child friendly learning objectives, success criteria and learning journeys)
- Be clear about learning outcomes: in terms of what pupils are to do, find out, understand, produce.
- Ensure children are all challenged at an appropriate level
- Ensure that all children have opportunities to actively engage in learning throughout lessons
- Have written plans available which communicate and clarify above.
- Value, use and extend pupils' interests, experiences and knowledge.
- Match lessons and learning tasks to pupils' abilities.
- Organise the classroom to provide flexibility i.e. for individual work, collaboration and small group work and class teaching sessions.
- Be appropriately and readily resourced prior to the start of the lesson
- Use teacher modelling in a variety of ways (speaking and listening, reading and writing)
- Ensure pace is sufficient to keep pupils motivated and learning is moving forward
- Group pupils appropriately according to content of lessons/learning
- Explain and demonstrate clearly tasks to be undertaken. Be explicit and use appropriate language. Use mini plenaries to recap on instructions and ask questions to check and assess that children know what to do
- Use plenaries to review the learning at the end of the lesson
- Encourage pupils to recall relevant earlier learning experiences, opportunities for them to make connections and to build on what they know and can do.

- Ensure that pupils see the point of what they are doing: i.e. make explicit reasons for learning new skills and how they will be of use in the future.
- Assess and mark children's learning, following the school's Assessment and Marking Policy
- Make time for children to reflect on their learning experiences

Effective teaching and learning takes place in an **environment** in which:

- relationships provide a confident and positive atmosphere
- it is stimulating, purposeful and where children's work is valued and displayed appropriately
- a culture of self-evaluation prevails
- there is time for reflection
- learning is valued
- there is mutual respect between all members of the school learning community
- no-one is afraid of making mistakes
- lessons are well-paced; teachers vary pace to match the task and children's needs
- support from home is encouraged

### **Progress**

The most important measure of teaching is its impact on progress. This underpins all elements of teaching and learning to ensure that we strive to provide the best progress, which is highly visible, measurable and sustained across all subjects.

## **Staff Responsibility**

### **Role of the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher**

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher act as leaders for teaching and learning within the school in various ways including:

- Monitoring of teaching and learning through lesson observations, intake of outcomes across the school and discussions with children and staff
- Ensuring the National Curriculum and EYFS are implemented in classes across the school.
- Ensuring CPD time, when appropriate.
- Providing a budget for sufficient resources.
- Enabling co-ordinators to work alongside other staff, where appropriate
- Reporting to Governors about the quality of teaching and learning across the school

### **Role of the Co-ordinators and Aspect Leaders**

The coordinators and phase leaders:

- Lead the teaching and learning in their curriculum area
- Provide a model of effective teaching in their curriculum area
- Develop teaching ideas, strategies and resources for use by other teachers
- Support other teachers with their planning
- Monitor curriculum plans to encourage good coverage of their curriculum area throughout the school.
- Develop and review policies, curriculum maps and schemes of work
- Monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their curriculum area
- Manage their curriculum area within the School Improvement Plan and collaborate with other colleagues and co-ordinators where appropriate

### **Role of the Staff**

In order to ensure a coherent and consistent approach to teaching and learning, the teaching staff :

- Plan in accordance with school guidelines on Curriculum Planning & Assessment and work collaboratively with other school staff on Planning and Assessment.
- Use school produced planning formats. Ensure that written plans are accessible, organised and capable of being used by the Head teacher, Curriculum Leaders, Parents and the Inspectorate to monitor the delivery of the National Curriculum.
- Give significant amounts of time to assessing pupils' attainments, sampling their work, and gathering evidence that can be used to improve future planning.
- Ensure coverage of the National Curriculum in line with school policies
- Provide a positive classroom environment and adhere to the school ethos following procedures outlined in the school's Behaviour Policy.
- Organise classrooms to provide for a substantial range of learning activities; allow flexibility in the grouping of pupils; promote independent learning, and use display effectively.
- Attend CPD, when necessary, to further enhance the quality of teaching and learning
- Liaise with and work alongside Leaders, when appropriate

- Differentiate work appropriately to ensure access to developing skills

### **Role of Children**

In order to learn effectively, children need long term strategies for managing both the social context of the classroom and their own learning.

Children need to:

- Understand daily routines and how their weekly timetable works. This involves knowing what is expected of them at different times of the day/week.
- Know what is expected of them in different learning contexts
- Know how to access and use appropriate resources.
- Know how to use available "help routes" i.e. know that the first stop for help is ones self, then classroom resources, then other children and finally the adults in the room.
- Know what to do with complete/Incomplete work.
- Have time and opportunities to acquire and practice cross-curricular skills.
- Have time and opportunities to reflect on their learning
- Practice working collaboratively i.e. listening to others, sharing, taking turns, learning, from one another.

### **Role of Parents**

In order to ensure a coherent and consistent approach to teaching and learning, parents are asked to support their child's learning by :

- Talking to their children about their learning
- Ensuring that their child completes any set home learning
- Attending termly Parents' Evenings to discuss their child's learning
- Keeping the school informed of any issues which may affect their child's learning

### **Learning about Learning and Teaching**

Staff are committed to increasing their understanding about the process of learning and teaching. CPD time in school will be allocated for this purpose in order that staff are kept fully up to date with research, policy and practice.

### **Classroom Organisation For Learning and Teaching**

Quality learning can be judged to take place when children:

- Show a clear understanding of the task being undertaken and can verbalise this.
- Are on task and engaged purposely in what they are doing.
- Can be seen to be working independently or collaboratively.
- Demonstrate perseverance and concentration when acquiring or practising new or specific skills.
- Bring previous learning experiences (i.e. skills, concepts and knowledge) to the task in hand and show an ability to use and apply what has previously been learned to new situations.
- Use a range of learning strategies i.e. observing closely; reflecting; listening; raising questions; trying out ideas' recording findings.
- Demonstrate an ability to communicate information and ideas in various ways.
- Are able to select and use appropriate resources.
- Are able to initiate ideas for extending their own learning and as a result, plan, undertake and sustain future work.
- Know that they have acquired new learning and can reflect on its value.
- Are able to evaluate their own work and can, depending on age and stage of development, set themselves future targets.
- Are able to explain or demonstrate their work to a wider audience.

To ensure that quality learning will occur, the organisation of the classroom environment is critical.

The classroom environment should be stimulating – enhancing and celebrating children's learning. Classrooms have clearly defined areas for Literacy (including a Book Area), Numeracy, Science and ICT. Classroom display should represent past and current learning. There also may be opportunities for displays to promote future lines of enquiry and study. They should stimulate interest in a theme, introduce, summarise or reinforce knowledge and skills and celebrate children's work.

The following should be displayed in all classrooms:

- Class Rules/Expectations
- Lists of Literacy, Numeracy and any other groupings
- Weekly Planning – Literacy, Numeracy
- Copy of General Timetable and visual timetable if appropriate to age and needs of children
- Playground Duty
- Split List
- Time Out Class List

Teachers should consider the layout of their classrooms carefully to ensure that children can safely move around the classroom and are able to access resources and materials.

Children are taught through a range of teaching styles depending on the age of the children and topic being taught. Medium Term Plans and weekly plans in Literacy and Numeracy will reflect these teaching styles.

Effective teaching requires teachers to make decisions about what to provide and how to respond to the individual needs of pupils. All teachers are expected to plan and deliver differentiated learning. The key features of differentiation are as follows:

- Differentiation acknowledges individual differences.
- Differentiation is based on the notion of an entitlement curriculum with common goals for all pupils.
- Differentiation demands effective assessment.
- Differentiation requires careful planning, based on clear learning objectives.
- Differentiation empowers pupils to succeed.
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All teachers plan and deliver differentiated learning by planning for a range of abilities; matching learning tasks to abilities; ensuring that tasks are based on previous learning; arranging the composition of groups to suit the tasks; providing for different groups of children to work on separate tasks related to their learning, needs and levels of attainment; providing opportunities for pupils to take on different roles within, and to work on different aspects of a common group activity; and providing activities that allow for a range of different outcomes but which also show progress and success for each Pupil. Differentiated activities are noted on both medium term and weekly planning.

The role of Support Staff and Teaching Assistants is also considered by Class Teachers to support and enhance the learning of children in class.

### **Monitoring of Teaching and Learning**

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher formally observe all teachers throughout the year on at least three occasions to monitor the quality of learning and teaching. Feedback is always provided – both written and verbal. These observations are kept on file as a means of monitoring teaching and learning throughout the school. The middle leadership team also observe throughout the year.

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher also make ongoing observations of the quality of teaching and learning through informal learning walks.

Curriculum Weeks are held at least three times a year.

### **Resources**

Resources to support and enhance the quality of teaching and learning are available in school in all areas of the curriculum. Staff should use these resources wherever appropriate. Co-ordinators take responsibility for ensuring that these resources are kept up to date and in good working condition.

### **Home – School Learning Links**

An effective home – school partnership is the key to a child's success and happiness in school. We acknowledge and value all children's home experiences and aim to further enhance the partnership between home and school.

Home learning consists of activities that consolidate skills, understanding and knowledge of areas being covered in class. Activities vary depending on the child's age and stage of development. Details of activities are noted in the termly class letters.

Sullivan also believes in reading on a daily basis and children take home books to read with parents on a regular basis.

Parents and Carers are asked to support the school by ensuring that their child completes any set home learning, attending termly Parents' Evenings and by keeping up to date with school news by reading the weekly newsletter. Parents and Carers should inform the school if there are any issues that may affect their child's learning in school.

### **Equal Opportunities**

Equal Opportunities is an integral part of the school curriculum. Strategies are adopted to ensure that all children have the opportunity to succeed in all areas of the curriculum regardless of ability, gender, race and class.

Teachers are aware of these issues in their planning of all activities. They should also raise the level of consciousness on these issues with children in all curriculum areas.

### **Assessment**

Assessing the quality of learning for all children is fundamental to ensuring appropriate and challenging future learning experiences.

### **September 2013**

**Review Date: Autumn Term 2015**

