



TEACHING & LEARNING POLICY

Policy reviewed: March 2017

Review date: March 2019

Signed :


Chair of Staffing & Curriculum

Learning

There are a range of age- appropriate learning strategies identified by the staff:

- structured and free play
- balance of open ended and closed tasks
- exploration and experimentation,
- independent and directed learning,
- trial and error,
- first-hand experience,
- imitation

Teachers are also very aware that different children have different preferred learning styles: visual, aural and kinaesthetic. They take this into account when planning and teaching in order to maximise learning potential and pupils are taught to apply and develop all styles.

Teaching

To meet the needs of each child we plan effectively to include every child in consistently high quality, personalised teaching. We do this by:

- having sharp and clear lesson objectives
- having a clear understanding of why the learning is taking place and what we are aiming to achieve. This is explicitly shared with the children.
- maximising the opportunities for the children to be active learners within the lesson, creating a 'buzz' of learning.
- having high expectations of quantity and quality of outcome and making this clear to the children.
- appropriate questioning - we have questioning skills prompts displayed in all classroom based on Bloom's Taxonomy.
- modelling and explaining (both teacher and pupils.)
- planning for many opportunities for learning through dialogue with learning partners, small groups and whole class.

Assessment

To ensure learning is personalised for each child we use:

- assessments of children's work including marking,
- tracking data and comparisons to curriculum expectations and national and local averages.
- steps to Success planning with parents and carers for children with additional needs.
- half termly pupil progress meetings to discuss every child and consider whether additional intervention needs to take place to address areas of concern.

(See also our Assessment Policy)

Inclusion

Special Educational Needs

We try to identify the particular needs of a child as soon as possible. We have access to guidance and assessment from not only the educational psychologist but also the LEA speech and language team and Counselling services. We make full use of home visits before Reception to pick up on any special need which a child might have. We try to give any child who needs it, extra help and support from within school resources. The Inclusion Manager facilitates this support but we regard every teacher as a teacher of children with special educational needs.

(Please also see our SEND Policy)

Children with English as a Second or as an Additional Language (ESAL)

A small proportion of pupils at St Peters have English as their second language but nevertheless, the explicit teaching of language is embedded in our day to day practice and set out in our

planning through key questions and vocabulary. Teachers ensure that learning is through dialogue. Acquiring understanding of any concept requires dialogue on a number of levels – internal, with a learning partner, small group and as part of whole class interaction. All pupils, and in particular those with more than one language, benefit from opportunities to rework and rehearse their understandings and explanations before more formal presentation. We recognise the need for children to develop a good command of a range of language structures if they are to express their learning.

Differentiation

All the children are in mixed ability groups but in certain subjects, principally English and Maths, the children sometimes work with others of a similar level. These groupings are flexible and take into account successful learning partners, personalities, progress etc. In many lessons children assess their own starting point and self-differentiate. They are offered three chilli challenges: mild, medium and hot with explanations for each task. The children then choose their own level of differentiation and work from that point. This allows for more personalised learning and encourages children to be reflective and proactive learners.

Use of support staff

The role of support staff is to support the children's learning and ensure, together with the class teacher, that they make progress. The teacher manages the adults and engages them in tasks that optimise the quality of learning in the lesson. The key role of other adults in the classroom is to enable all pupils to participate effectively in the lesson. They work with all ability levels at different times and are expected to move the children's learning on as appropriate even if this involves moving away from the original plan for the lesson. All support staff are given the lessons plans in advance and a weekly year group meeting provides a detailed overview with opportunities to discuss any issues.

Prior to the lesson the teacher will brief support staff so that they are aware of:

- the key outcomes
- the child or group with whom s/he will work
- the outcomes which apply to those pupils
- the nature of the activity to be undertaken, including key questions and recording

All support staff feed back to the class teacher and make suggestions for future learning.

The Learning Environment

Children spend a significant amount of their lives in our classrooms. They should be safe, ordered and calm places to be, as well worlds of curiosity. We ensure that the environment in which the children learn is:

- colourful and stimulating.
- have displays which celebrate children's best work, and offer stimulating, up to date topic information.
- supportive of independent learning via prompts and reminders.
- neat and well-ordered as a model for the neatness and order we expect from children
- organised so as to create a calm, harmonious working environment
- the interactive whiteboards and other teaching boards are clearly visible to all pupils from where they work, taking into account the possibility of reflective glare, the quality of the pupils' eyesight and the size of print
- teachers' writing is legible, neat, intelligently laid out and provide a good model of school handwriting styles

- pupils are enabled to 'interact' with the IWB

Desks are laid out in order to maximise learning potential; and a range of possible configurations are used. Furniture will be arranged so as to:

- maximise the space available for effective Teaching and Learning
- enable children to gain access to resources efficiently and safely
- optimise learning by offering the most suitable group configuration
- allow people to move through the classroom safely

Resources

Learning resources are introduced and deployed in order to maximise learning potential and resources are evaluated by teachers and teaching assistants. Resources are organised in such a way as to ensure that:

- they are easily accessible by children as well as adults.
- they are kept in good condition
- they are stored safely and neatly

Parents / Carers

We see our parents or carers as partners with us in the education of the child. We believe that when parents / carers and teachers work together to support children's learning the effect on their learning is marked and measurable. To be successful this partnership needs to offer opportunities for knowledge, expertise and information to flow both ways. Some of the features of this partnership apparent in this school are:

- the parent's fundamental role in their children's education is acknowledged by all the staff in the school and prompted on occasions like Parents' Evenings. There is a recognition of the important role parents have played in the early education of their child and that their continual involvement is crucial to successful learning.
- parents feel welcome in the school and there are opportunities for collaboration between parent, teacher and child for example at Parents' Evenings.
- teachers give parents information about the curriculum in a variety of ways, for example parents meetings, presentation evenings, workshops, social events and newsletters.
- parents are kept fully informed of their child's progress and achievements. A report is issued three times a year to share and discuss their child's attitude to learning and academic progress. In this way parents and teachers can form a more successful partnership and plan the next steps for each child.
- in the Foundation Stage, teachers carry out home visits so that every child in Reception is visited in the home setting before they come to school.