



TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for teaching and learning at Great Bookham School. It lays the foundations for the whole curriculum, both formal and informal and forms the context in which all other policy statements should be read.

It was developed through a process of consultation with teaching staff and governors.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

WHAT IS TEACHING AND LEARNING?

Teaching and Learning is the purpose of our school. It is the sum of the processes through which we offer a curriculum which is broad and balanced and meets the requirements of the Education Reform Act relating to the National Curriculum and religious education and collective worship.

PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

- We see Teaching and Learning as a process of co-operative team work and welcome and encourage the involvement of parents and others in the community.
- All members of the school community (teaching and non-teaching staff, parents, pupils and governors) work towards the school's aims by:
 - recognising children as individuals and respecting their rights, values and beliefs;
 - fostering and promoting good relationships and a sense of belonging to the school community;
 - providing a well-ordered environment in which all are fully aware of behavioural expectations;
 - offering equal opportunities in all aspects of school life and recognising the importance of different cultures;
 - encouraging, praising and positively reinforcing good relationships, behaviour and work, and
 - working as a team, supporting and encouraging one another.

TEACHERS work towards the school's aims by:

- providing a challenging and stimulating programme of study designed to enable all children to reach the highest standards of personal achievement;
- recognising and being constantly aware of the needs of each individual child according to ability and aptitude;
- ensuring that learning is progressive, continuous and enjoyable;
- being good role models (punctual, well-prepared and organised);
- maintaining an up-to-date knowledge of the National Curriculum;
- having a positive attitude to change and the development of their own expertise through INSET, appraisal, mentoring processes and evaluation;

- establishing links with the local community including industry, to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life, and
- working collaboratively with a shared philosophy.

PUPILS work toward the school's aims by

- attending school in good health maintained by adequate diet, exercise and sleep;
- attending school regularly;
- being punctual and ready to begin lessons on time;
- being organised - bringing necessary kit, taking letters home promptly, returning reading books regularly;
- conducting themselves in an orderly manner, in line with the expected code of discipline, and
- taking growing responsibility for their own learning.

PARENTS work toward the school's aims by

- ensuring that children attend school in good health, regularly and punctually;
- providing support for the discipline within the school and for the teacher's role;
- being realistic about their children's abilities and offering encouragement and praise;
- participating in discussions concerning their child's progress and attainment;
- ensuring early contact with school to discuss matters which affect their child's happiness, progress and behaviour;
- giving due importance to homework, hearing reading and assisting in learning of tables and spellings, and
- allowing their children to take increasing responsibility as they progress throughout the school.

STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

Strategies for Ensuring Progress and Continuity

LANGUAGE OF LEARNING - We promote a 'language of learning' to empower every child to ask the following questions:

- Learning objectives / purpose - What am I learning and why?
- Success criteria / steps to success - What are my steps to success? What do I need to do to achieve my goal?
- Self-selection and challenge - Which task will I choose? How will I challenge myself today?
- Resources / learning tools - What resources can I use to help me? Who could I collaborate with to help me?
- Outcomes – Am I going to work independently, as a group or with a partner?
- Self / peer assessment - How will I know whether I have been successful?
- Next steps - What are my next steps? Where will this learning take me?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES - All learning objectives are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timed) and teachers ask themselves the following questions when they are planning:

- Smart - Is it a learning objective rather than a task objective?
- Measurable - Can it be evaluated as to whether it has been achieved or not?
- Achievable - Are all children academically/ developmentally ready for it?
- Relevant - Is it 'curriculum' appropriate? Does it link to/ build on prior learning?
- Timed - Is it achievable within the set time limit?

Lesson objectives are linked to the English National Curriculum and assessed each lesson in the class record book.

SUCCESS CRITERIA - is shared with the children in every lesson. Sometimes the Success Criteria will be generated by the children themselves.

There are 2 main types of success criteria - 'product' success criteria and 'process' success criteria, and either can be used in a lesson depending on the learning objective and focus of the learning.

- 'Product' success criteria is a list of expected criteria that would need to be evident for the 'product' (or outcome) to be successful (E.g. – How I know that I have been successful).
- 'Process' success criteria is a list of procedural steps that would need to be followed for the learner to be successful e.g. 'steps to success' for written mathematical calculations (E.g. – What I need to do to be successful).

When used effectively, success criteria allows children to be active participants in their learning by:

1. Ensuring that they have an appropriate focus and fully understand expectations.
2. Creating opportunities for children to discuss and clarify their understanding.
3. Enabling children to identify personal success for themselves.
4. Creating opportunities for them to identify their next steps and how they can improve.
5. Enabling children to track their own progress.

PLANNING is a process in which all teachers are involved, wherein:

- the foundation for curricular planning is the School Development Plan developed through a process of collaboration between staff and governors;
- a School Curriculum map details the balance of the curriculum ensuring full coverage of the National Curriculum;
- schemes of work for individual subjects are developed by curriculum teams (in collaboration with the whole staff) and are contained in detailed curriculum policy statements;
- regular staff meetings are used to discuss various aspects of the curriculum and ensure consistency of approach and standards;
- National Curriculum records are maintained for each child and used for assessment purposes and the information of the next teacher, and
- cross-phase liaison ensures smooth transition on entry and departure.

SUBJECT CO-ORDINATORS have a variety of roles. They:

- take the lead in policy development and the production of schemes of work designed to ensure progression and continuity in their subject throughout the school;
- support colleagues in their development of detailed work plans and implementation of the scheme of work, and in assessment and record keeping activities;
- monitor progress in their subjects and advise the Headteacher on action needed;
- take responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central resources for their subjects;
- support colleagues in the classroom, and
- are expected to keep up-to-date knowledge about their subject through reading and attending relevant courses.

FEEDBACK TO PUPILS about their own progress is achieved through the marking of work. Effective marking

- aims to help children learn and comments aim to be positive and constructive;
- is often done while a task is being carried out through discussion between child and teacher, and
- of written work, is used sensitively and with discretion so that a child can assimilate a limited number of corrections at one time - this will vary according to age and ability.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT is used to guide the progress of individual pupils. It involves identifying each child's progress in each area of the curriculum, determining what each child has learned and what therefore should be the next stage in his/her learning. Formative assessment is mostly carried out informally by teachers in the course of their teaching. Suitable tasks for assessment include:

- small group discussions, perhaps in the context of a practical task;
- short tests in which the teacher gives questions orally and pupils write answers;
- specific assignments for individual pupils, and
- individual discussions in which children are encouraged to appraise their own work and progress.

CROSS PHASE CONTINUITY is ensured by:

- regular liaison meetings between teacher of year 6 pupils and those from prospective secondary schools;
- visits to secondary schools by Year 6 pupils;
- transfer of pupil records of progress and summative assessment results;
- close links with infant schools, and
- secondary phase teachers participating in school work/activities.

STRATEGIES FOR RECORDING AND REPORTING

RECORDS OF PROGRESS kept for each child are:

- updated each half term by class teachers and contain samples of pupils' work;
- examined by class teachers at the start of each academic year as they prepare for a new class, and
- retained throughout the child's time at the school and passed on to secondary school when pupils leave.

REPORTING TO PARENTS is done on a termly basis through consultations and annually through a written report.

FORMAL SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT is carried out at the end of each National Curriculum Key Stage through the use of SATs and teacher assessment.

Each child is assessed annually in Mathematics, Reading, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation using standardised tests.

STRATEGIES FOR THE USE OF RESOURCES

CLASSROOM RESOURCES are the responsibility of classroom teachers supported by Subject + Phase Co-ordinators who ensure that:

- there is a range of appropriate, accessible and labelled resources available from which pupils can select materials suitable to the task in hand;
- all children know where resources are kept and the rules about their access and use;
- all children know what they must not touch for reasons of safety and privacy;
- children are encouraged to act independently in choosing, collecting and returning resources where appropriate, and
- children and teachers act together to establish an attractive, welcoming and well-organised environment promoting respect, care and value for all resources.

CENTRAL RESOURCES are generally the responsibility of subject co-ordinators. Stationery is ordered by the school office/Headteacher and stored centrally with free access for all staff.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY is a major resource which is used across the whole curriculum (see IT Policy and individual subject policies for details).

LIBRARIES both reference and non-fiction provide opportunities for extending and supporting learning.

HEALTH AND SAFETY issues are the responsibility of all who work in the school. The Building Manager is nominated as Health and Safety representative.

TEACHING AND LEARNING PHILOSOPHY

How Do We Organise the Children?

The children are organised into teaching groups according to the following criteria:

- mixed ability;
- mixed gender, and
- children who should or should not be together.

We have a high regard for the information we receive from the children's Infant School which will be based upon the teacher's knowledge of the child's abilities over a number of terms. The Infant School will have a detailed knowledge of the child including information about any relevant home circumstances. All our Feeder Schools have a very strong and positive relationship with their parents and we know that the hopes and aspirations of the parents will be reflected in their recommendations for the child.

Every school is visited prior to the child's entry to Great Bookham School.

Parents' views are taken into consideration when selecting teaching groups. We strongly advise parents to discuss this matter with their child's current Headteacher who will be able to put this information into the broader context of the whole learning situation and advise accordingly.

What Is Our Philosophy of Education?

We believe that children learn best when they are taught in an atmosphere of high expectation and total respect.

High expectation is characterised by the belief that each child's contribution is valued and accepted when it is the product of their very best endeavours. High expectation covers not only all aspects of the National Curriculum subjects but also includes behaviour, respect for themselves and others and the children's contribution to the common good.

Children will learn best when there is a genuine respect between the teacher and the child. The child must 'know' that the teacher will do anything and everything to help them learn and that all things within the school are there to help them grow and develop physically, emotionally, spiritually and intellectually. The child will not necessarily be able to articulate this notion of total support however it is our belief that a child growing up within a 'loving' and supportive environment will feel a strong sense of worth and well-being which will enable him/her to be 'high achievers' at whatever level they are able to operate. Learning styles are considered when planning and delivering lessons.

Risk Taking

Children who are supported as outlined above will have the strength and confidence to take 'risks' in their learning and it is only by taking 'risks' that the child will break new ground and try fresh ideas. In a classroom environment that positively encourages 'having a go' children will quickly learn that learning is an adventure for everyone and not restricted to those who get the 'right' answer first time. Teachers who only accept 'right' answers will restrict learning to the children who know already and run the risk of alienating the child who wishes at that stage to make a guess - a guess that with skilful teaching can become the right answer next time.

We believe that true education is an interactive activity between the teacher and the child. Skilled teaching is characterised by engaging the child in the pursuit of knowledge and this can take time. We should always encourage children to talk about and explain their understanding at a particular stage in order that teachers may consolidate and further extend their learning.

You only take risks with those you trust

HOW DO WE ORGANISE THE CURRICULUM

The curriculum consists of all the planned activities that take place within the school. Each distinct curriculum area is covered by a detailed Policy Statement that has been developed by the subject co-ordinator and approved by the Governing Body.

A curriculum map has been devised which establishes the overall breadth and scope of the curriculum allocating appropriate time to each aspect of the curriculum.

Each teacher is a member of at least one Curriculum Team led by a senior teacher. The Curriculum Team is responsible for monitoring their subject including resources and curriculum development issues. The Team will act as promoters of their curriculum area offering advice, support and future developments. The Curriculum Team will take a leading role in curriculum reviewing procedures.

LONG/MEDIUM/SHORT TERM PLANS

Each Year Group will develop the medium-term plan for their year based upon the school long-term plans. Long and medium-term planning is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team, led by the Head Teacher.

Short-term planning is undertaken within the Year Group and by each teacher who will plan with the detailed knowledge of their own class.

RESOURCES

Resources within the school and classroom play an important part in any child's education. Poor resourcing can hinder and frustrate the teacher whilst good resourcing can liberate and extend the range of opportunities for the children.

Not all resourcing is simply a matter of money, although an adequate level of funding is vital. The effect of targeting of funds is achieved through clear and unambiguous curriculum planning, by listening to teachers and children, and by making a sustained contribution to ensuring the teacher is not inhibited by lack of books, art equipment etc.

We believe that each teacher, year group and curriculum area should be given a generous level of resources that free the teacher from having to inhibit their plans for the children. Whilst the difference in financial terms between meagre and generous resources is often very little, the difference in terms of educational opportunity is enormous.

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

At Great Bookham School our building and grounds play a vital role in our work with the children. We believe that an environment which supports and enhances the learning process will not only help the teachers in their task but will also give the children a sense of pride and worth.

When children grow within a positive environment which has been carefully designed to support their work, where cleanliness and order are valued and where they have clear responsibilities and duties, they will develop into adults who understand these values for themselves.

CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS

Classroom Assistants have proved to be invaluable in their support of the teacher. They are given training equivalent to Level 3 NVQ.

Classroom Assistants are on duty from 8.45 and have timetabled duties at break times.

All activities undertaken by the Classroom Assistants are under the supervision of the class teacher who plans, monitors and assesses the work.

Parents are welcomed into the school to share our life with the children. They play an invaluable role in enriching children's learning experiences with the skills and expertise that they bring. We welcome parents' contributions to help with hearing readers, with sporting events and with various field trips and excursions. All parents are subject to DBS checks.

Whilst parents' involvement at school is respected and valued, we believe that they should never be given responsibility for important aspects of the curriculum which are rightly and legally the responsibility of the class teacher. In practice, this means that all activities are planned, controlled

and assessed by the class teacher with parents sometimes assisting with groups or individuals within that activity. Each teacher has to monitor the support of parents, carefully matching expertise to task. Teachers have more detailed guidelines within the Staff Handbook.

Our philosophy in relation to parents is based upon the total belief that parents matter. If parents have concerns or questions about how, what or why, then we have the duty to answer accordingly to their satisfaction. Sometimes their concerns can seem trivial, however a parent's genuine worry, no matter how small, must be addressed.

Most questions can be answered quickly and misunderstanding avoided. Occasionally the school will have to stand firm on an issue which may not be immediately satisfying to a parent; however if a genuine attempt is made to explain and understand each other's point of view, then it is hoped that parents will feel reassured.

It is important to explain to parents that we want what is best for their child. Parents who get to know the teacher will understand the care and commitment we have for the child and feel reassured, even if they do not always fully understand the method.

HOMEWORK

We recognise the enormous value that a systematic approach to homework can add to a child's overall progress at school and each child from Year 3 onwards is encouraged to work at home beyond the school day.

An essential element for successful homework is the sustained support of the parent. If parents encourage and welcome homework then the child will gain maximum benefit. Parents are asked to help the child if necessary and monitor carefully the child's work. If they feel that the breadth and range of the homework is inappropriate then discussion with the class teacher will enable adjustments to be made.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

We recognise the value of working with children beyond the normal school day. Activities such as sport, drama, clubs, art and music are just the tip of an enormous iceberg of opportunities which capture the children's imagination and can be used as vehicles for furthering and deepening the teacher/child relationship. This enables teachers to work with different groups of children in a slightly more relaxed atmosphere than normal classroom life. When parents and other responsible adults are encouraged to share their skills and expertise, this can help to develop a productive and powerful community approach to the educative process.

INSET

The need for teachers and other staff to grow and develop professionally is self-evident. Each member of staff is valued for the contribution that they make and is professionally cherished to help them develop new skills and extend the range and scope of their work. This is organised through a detailed Staff Development Plan calendar developed by the Headteacher and Trust.