

CATSHILL FIRST SCHOOL AND NURSERY



TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY 2014

Date of Policy:

February 2014

Review Date:

September 2015 (New SLT)

Member of Staff Responsible:

HOS

Signature

Chair of Committee

Date

Vision Statement (Written by the Children of CFSN)

We want Catshill First School and Nursery to be an amazing school where we welcome all new children, staff and visitors and they feel we are a friendly and safe school. Everyone in our school will care for each other, our community and our world.

We want our school to be fun when we are learning and playing. We want to always try our best and keep learning new exciting things that will make us learners of the future.

We want our learning to be inside and outside and we want it to be imaginative and creative.

We will help everyone to make the right choices and enjoy being a healthy school where we look after each other so everyone is happy in our school.

We will celebrate our achievements and successes together!

1. Introduction:

At Catshill First School and Nursery, we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and in the idea that both adults and children learn new things every day. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone; in short, it should be 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 life and with the ability to apply those skills, knowledge and understanding in their lifelong journey as learners. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives.

2. Aims:

Through our teaching we aim to:

- provide relevant and stimulating experiences and opportunities which foster enjoyment and an enduring positive attitude towards learning;
- encourage a high level of individual responsibility for conduct and learning by training children to actively listen, reflect on experiences and achievement and develop the ability to discern and make choices;
- foster children's self-esteem, and help them to build positive relationships with other people;
- raise standards of achievement by providing a broad and balanced stimulating curriculum that meets both statutory requirements and individual children's needs and which enables children to steadily improve on their previous best;
- develop spiritual, moral, social and cultural values as we work together to create a happy, secure environment where everybody is cared for and treated courteously;
- develop an understanding and respect for each other's faith, culture and language whilst providing equal opportunities for all;
- maintain a child-centred environment that recognises and encourages individual achievement and reflects the richness of our cultural diversity.
- build strong and close parental partnerships where parents feel school is approachable, are well informed and purposefully involved in their children's learning and in the life of the school.
- help children grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens.

3. Effective Learning:

People learn in many different ways, and respond best to different types of input (visual, auditory and kinaesthetic); When planning, we must take this into account.

When considering the structure of a lesson, learning-theory tells us:

- to connect the learning with previous work;
- to give learners the 'big picture' of the whole lesson;
- to explain the learning objectives, and why the lesson is important;
- to explain the success criteria for achieving the learning objective,
- to present the information in a range of styles;
- to allow opportunities for the pupils to build up their own understanding through various activities;
- to review what has been learnt, and so increase recollection;
- to provide feedback, celebrating success and reviewing learning strategies;
- to outline the next step in the learning before moving on.

Within a lesson we may also play music to accompany learning and provide 'brain breaks' to refocus attention or enjoy a 'Wake & Shake' session as well as providing water to aid concentration.

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

- following their own interests;
- investigation and problem-solving;
- research and discovery;
- group work;
- paired 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.

We encourage children actively to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn – what helps them learn, and what makes it difficult for them to learn.

Organisation

Organisation of the class varies to best facilitate the learning task. Children work as a whole class, in groups, in specific groups by ability (Blue, Green, Orange, Red, Yellow), with learning partners and individually.

All children have a learning partner and this is visible in the classroom.

Planning ensures children are not kept on the carpet for long periods on the carpet listening to teachers talking.

Resources such as toolkits, whiteboards, number fans, scaffolding prompts are available and accessible. Classrooms are stimulating environments which facilitate independent learners.

Effective Teaching:

CURRICULUM

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. Topics have an unlocking the learning or 'WOW' start and a locking the learning in to celebrate all the learning at the end of the topic.

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

Teachers make ongoing informal and formal (APP/EYFS Profile) assessments of children'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 Pupil Map and /or class provision plans. Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for children with disabilities whilst ensuring they remain part of the class group.

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.

SHORT-TERM PLANNING

We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives. We take these objectives from the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Curriculum, National Curriculum or the appropriate frameworks in which our curriculum plans are based on, e.g. RWI. Our lesson plans/weekly plans contain information about the teaching focus, tasks to be set, i.e. differentiation, resources needed (including use of adults) and the way we assess the children's work, e.g. APP focus and/or key questions. We evaluate lessons so that we can modify and improve our future teaching. This is reflected in annotations made by adults on all planning.

RELATIONSHIPS

Our staff make a concerted effort to establish good working relationships with all the children in school. 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 all class activities.

All our teachers follow the school policy with regard to behaviour and classroom management. We set and agree with children the class behaviour charter, and we expect all children to sign the charter at the start of the academic year. Children develop Learning Zone Charters to support them moving round school and learning in the classroom. We praise children for their efforts in order to help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. We have high expectations of behaviour at all times. When children need time to 'put their behaviour right' they take

responsibility for this. We follow the guidelines for sanctions as outlined in our 'Behaviour for Learning Policy'.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

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 all necessary permissions are obtained. We inform parents, and obtain their permission, before the visit takes place.

TEACHING ASSISTANTS

We deploy teaching assistants and other adult helpers as effectively as possible to support learning. Sometimes they work with individual children, and sometimes they work with small groups. Some of our teaching assistants take responsibility for engaging children who have significant areas of need, e.g. children with medical needs or communication and language difficulties. Teaching assistants collect evidence of learning in a 'Capture Book' and this instigates feedback and discussions on pupil progress. Teaching assistants have been given support in the use of key questions to help children reach their full learning potential.

Assessment and Data Analysis

Evidence for formative assessment comes through interactions in class, marking and feedback to children. It is led by class teachers with contributions from teaching assistants

Once per half term Class teachers collate and record formative assessment as summative assessment and a level is given using APP guidance. Class teachers assess this work using APP and make a note of the level it will contribute to and reasons why it is that level, noting also the next steps in learning for the child. Class teachers fill in Excel tracking sheets showing progress in levels and average point scores at the end of each half term.

Senior leaders regularly analyse tracking sheets to check rates of progress and to identify possible underachievement. Detailed analysis of progress of EYFS, KS1, KS2 data, achievement and progress by:

Year group, gender, SEN, Pupil Premium (PP)/(FSM), Safeguard vulnerable (VCR), achievement vulnerable (target children), gifted and talented, phonics knowledge, attendance.

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Our classrooms are attractive learning environments. We encourage staff to develop the use of 'working walls' within the classroom environment. These are updated regularly and should always reflect the current topics being studied. We ensure that all children have the opportunity to display their best work at some time during the year. Every class displays half termly Home learning projects. Classrooms generally have a range of dictionaries and both fiction and non-fiction books, as well as displays relating to English and Maths. We also use displays as learning prompts for the children for things such as vocabulary. 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.

CONTINUED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

All teachers and teaching assistants reflect on their strengths and areas for development and plan their professional development accordingly. We do all we can to

support our teachers and teaching assistants in developing their skills so that they can continually improve their practice. Each Half term staff are given a copy of the PDM calendar.

We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all.

Monitoring and Assessment

Each half term staff are given a copy of the monitoring and assessment calendars. This details the list of assessments and data catch dates.

The monitoring calendar includes;

Learning Walks –inform the school’s evidence base of improvements to classroom environments and active learning.

Before the activity takes place the subject/aspect lead informs staff of the focus for the walk. During the walk teachers should not stop work when their class is visited.

Professional discussions can take place after the Walk if the lead feels this will give additional supporting evidence or the teacher wishes to discuss more.

Following the walk there will be feedback in the form of a summary of findings which highlight strengths and areas to develop. Good practice can be highlighted so that other staff can benefit from ideas and sharing good practice. There is an agreed proforma for this.

Book Scrutiny/Work Trawls –inform the schools evidence base of improvements in practice.

Before the activity takes place the subject/aspect lead informs staff of the focus of the trawl. The focus relates to an identified action on the SIP. A sample of children’s books are requested. Two colleagues work together to identify good practice within the books and identify areas for development. The lead writes up an overall summary of findings which is shared with colleagues. There is an agreed proforma to be used for this.

Planning scrutiny – informs the school's evidence base of improvements in planned provision. Annotated retrospective planning is found in the class Learning and Teaching file based in the classroom. The planning is scrutinised each week. Written feedback is given which summarises strengths and areas to work on and improvements since the last feedback. There is an agreed proforma to be used for this.

Pupil Progress Meetings - provide opportunities for SLT to discuss data tracking sheets for cohorts. At these meetings individual children are highlighted who are presenting as being vulnerable to underachievement. Possible barriers to learning are identified and actions noted. Teachers complete the impact of the actions/next steps and discuss at a further meeting. The children are RAG rated and by this meeting they should either be making accelerated progress or be reassessed for an IPM.

Roles & Responsibilities:

Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school’s approach to teaching and learning. In particular they:

- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating appropriate 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 and appraisal arrangements both promote high 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 Executive Head/HOS reports to governors at each full governing body meeting, and a review of the INSET training sessions attended by staff.

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 regular parents' meetings to explain our school strategies, e.g. for reading, writing, Maths and curriculum
- 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 giving parents regular reports through termly parent consultations, in which we explain the strengths of their child, the progress they have made and indicating how their child can improve further;
- a written report is sent annually
- explaining to parents how they can support their children with home learning, and suggesting, for example, regular shared reading with children, and support for older children with their projects and investigative work.

We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We would therefore like 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 do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school;
- 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.

Monitoring and review

We are aware of the need to monitor the school's Teaching & Learning Policy and to review it regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, research, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school. We will therefore review this policy **every three years** or earlier if necessary.