



## St Joseph's Catholic School Teaching and Learning Policy

*"Where everyone cares and everyone does their best"*

### Philosophy

Learning is the principle reason for the school's existence; it is at the heart of everything we do. It is an activity which involves, and is participated in, by everyone. The key to successful learning is effective teaching, differentiated to need and learning style. Effective teaching occurs when teachers understand and are able to apply the principles of the learning process to a range of children in a variety of situations.

We believe that each child is unique and made in the image and likeness of God. It is our responsibility, therefore, to nurture and develop each child in order that they reach their full potential.

As a Catholic school, guided by the gospel values of love, faith, trust, friendship and forgiveness, we will aim to:

**E**ncourage the gifts and talents of every child.

**D**evelop a holistic approach to the education of all children.

**U**nderstand the needs, wishes and aspirations of all our children.

**C**are and support our children in their learning, through an environment of teaching excellence.

**A**cknowledge the role of and maintain relationships with: parents, carers, governors, parish and the wider community within our school family.

**T**ake all opportunities, traditional and contemporary, to promote children's learning, health, safety and well-being.

**E**nsure that every child recognises and develops the skills to become a responsible, global citizen.

**Definition of effective learning:** each child achieves their full potential by developing and applying their knowledge, skills and understanding in a safe and secure learning environment which promotes independence and enjoyment.

## Learning Environment

We recognise the role of the environment in promoting positive attitudes to and supporting learning. We aim to provide a learning environment that:

- ❖ Is secure and safe
- ❖ Is rich in language
- ❖ Is rich in number
- ❖ Is well ordered and organised
- ❖ Conveys high levels of expectation
- ❖ Promotes an atmosphere of mutual respect
- ❖ Promotes independence and appropriate ways of working
- ❖ Is bright, colourful and stimulating to the senses.
- ❖ Uses role play areas to enhance the creative curriculum.
- ❖ Has a variety of displays covering the breadth of the curriculum, mainly including children's work.
- ❖ Has working walls to aid children's learning.
- ❖ Has displays which are interactive, record celebrations, set standards of presentation and reflect the children's work and interests
- ❖ Provides room for reflection
- ❖ Uses the outdoor environment where possible to enhance learning.
- ❖ Creates an atmosphere in which no-one is afraid of making mistakes

## Teaching

We recognise that the organisation and effectiveness of teaching has a direct impact on the quality of the child's learning experience. Within our work we aim to develop the following attributes:

- ❖ Have high and realistic expectations of ourselves and our pupils.
- ❖ Be well planned and organised
- ❖ Be a role model - punctual, dress and speak appropriately, show respect for others
- ❖ Be supportive of and assist colleagues by respecting individual differences and working collaboratively as part of a whole staff team
- ❖ Have appropriate levels of subject knowledge
- ❖ Take a reflective approach to our work
- ❖ Seek to improve our skills and understanding through planned professional development
- ❖ Develop classroom systems and organisation to support learning
- ❖ Enjoy our teaching and maintain our enthusiasm and good humour

We aim for our teaching to demonstrate:

- ❖ Good quality planning and appropriate levels of resourcing
- ❖ Clear and shared learning objectives and success criteria
- ❖ Appropriate use of grouping
- ❖ Differentiated and matched activities reflecting an understanding of pupils ability and development needs
- ❖ A range of teaching styles and methods
- ❖ Good pace with effective use of time
- ❖ Lesson organisation that involves children in their learning
- ❖ Developmental questioning
- ❖ Challenge, encourage risk taking and learning from mistakes
- ❖ Good quality marking which helps children know how to improve
- ❖ Assessment to have an impact on planning and intervention.

## Learning

Learners are most effective when they are involved in, and take responsibility for, their own learning. Learning, therefore, should aim to increase levels of independence and develops the ability to work with sustained concentration for age appropriate periods of time. Effective learning strategies we aim to promote are:

- ❖ The ability to ask and answer questions
- ❖ Concentration when listening
- ❖ Contribution to discussions in a relevant and thoughtful way
- ❖ Co-operating and working collaboratively with peers and adults
- ❖ Problem solving skills
- ❖ Selecting appropriate resources and putting them away
- ❖ Organisational skills
- ❖ Taking pride in the presentation of work and self
- ❖ The ability to reflect upon their work and that of others in order to improve
- ❖ To develop children's imagination and creativity.

## Learning Styles

Children learn in a variety of ways, and for this reason it is necessary to ensure that planning incorporates as many styles as possible. These styles include:

- ❖ Individual learning
- ❖ Collaborative learning in small groups or pairs
- ❖ One to one learning with an adult or more able pupil
- ❖ Whole class
- ❖ Independent learning

## Planning, Marking, Assessment and Tracking

At St Joseph's we are passionate about our creative curriculum. We strive to ensure that our literacy text is in context with the topic.

Planning for learning is done through:

- ❖ Teachers' lesson plans/smart notebook slides
- ❖ Curriculum based staff meetings
- ❖ Individual education Plans
- ❖ Informal discussions amongst colleagues
- ❖ Discussions between teaching and support staff

Marking and feedback should be a constructive process that focuses on:

- ❖ What the children have done well
- ❖ What they need to improve/ next steps in their learning journey
- ❖ How they can improve it

Feedback, whether oral or written, should:

- ❖ Be consistent across Key Stages
- ❖ Be manageable for teachers
- ❖ Relate to the learning objectives which are shared with the pupils
- ❖ Involve all adults working in the classroom
- ❖ Give increasing opportunities for pupils to reflect on their work and learning needs
- ❖ Give recognition and appropriate praise for achievement
- ❖ Give clear strategies for improvement
- ❖ Involve children in the process through opportunities to assess themselves and their peers
- ❖ Inform future planning
- ❖ Use agreed marking codes

Assessment is achieved through:

- ❖ Formal and informal testing
- ❖ Teacher assessments
- ❖ Self and peer assessments
- ❖ Statutory testing

### Target Setting

In addition to end of Key Stage targets, targets are set as part of the ongoing school improvement cycle. They may include:

- ❖ Curriculum targets for groups to support progress. Some individual targets may be set.
- ❖ Short term "incidental" targets set as part of the marking/feedback dialogue
- ❖ Child friendly targets will be sent home

## Tracking

Teachers track pupils each term. The system

- ❖ Is based on prior attainment
- ❖ Tracks pupils progress towards expected or targeted attainment
- ❖ Identifies pupils who are falling below their expected attainment in order to modify their learning and enable them to get back on track
- ❖ Identifies pupils who are exceeding their expected attainment , in order to adjust the curriculum or revise their targets
- ❖ Is clearly understood and manageable by the staff using it

## Sharing Learning Objectives and Success Criteria

The sharing of learning objectives is a crucial element in the process of teaching and learning. By sharing the objective, we empower the children to take ownership of their learning. We must ensure:

- ❖ The learning objectives of the lesson are clear and in words children understand
- ❖ Children understand the purpose of their learning
- ❖ Task instructions are clearly separated from the learning objective
- ❖ There are clear success criteria, which are informed by discussion between the children and their teacher
- ❖ The learning objective and success criteria are visually displayed and referred to at points throughout the lesson
- ❖ In our new maths scheme, learning objectives are not shared at the beginning of the lesson as the children will work out for themselves what the objective is.

## Resources

It is essential that teaching and learning needs to be supported by adequate levels of appropriately stored resources. Some resources will be communal and some classroom based, some will be subject specific, others general purpose. Resources within school should be:

- ❖ Of good quality showing appreciation for best value
- ❖ Ample for the levels of use
- ❖ Appropriate to the task
- ❖ Frequently reviewed for continued relevance
- ❖ Labelled in appropriate storage
- ❖ Varied to allow for differentiation and preference
- ❖ Meet the needs of pupils and staff
- ❖ Within the classroom arranged and organised to promote independence

## Monitoring Teaching and Learning

As part of a whole school approach to monitoring and evaluation, teaching and learning should be monitored regularly, in some form. Monitoring may draw on the following:

- ❖ Direct observation of teaching

- ❖ Learning Walks
- ❖ Drop ins
- ❖ Scrutiny of pupils work
- ❖ Scrutiny of planning
- ❖ Teacher's self-evaluation
- ❖ Pupil progress interviews
- ❖ Pupil Voice
- ❖ Analysis of assessment results
- ❖ Analysis of IEP'S

Ratified by *Governors* May 2009

Policy reviewed by all staff September 2016