

## **Whitchurch Combined School** **Learning and Teaching Policy**



At Whitchurch Combined School we believe in lifelong learning and the notion that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone. Through our teaching we equip pupils with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences plus an understanding and application of fundamental British Values, will help our pupils to fulfil their potential in modern society.

### **Aims:**

This learning and teaching policy is intended to promote consistency and high standards. At Whitchurch Combined School we aim to provide a safe, caring, supportive and stimulating environment with high quality teaching which facilitates the capacity to:

- Develop confident, disciplined and enquiring learners who are able to make informed choices and co-operate with others;
- Become self motivated and independent learners;
- Foster a love for learning;
- Raise levels of attainment for all pupils, enabling them to achieve their personal best;
- Enable pupils to develop a high level of literacy and numeracy in relation to their ability;
- Promote self-esteem and personal responsibility, linked to respect for the needs and feelings of others;
- Facilitate considerate and positive relationships between all members of the school community;
- Develop conscientious young citizens of our multi-cultural society who are tolerant and respect others' values;
- Ensure equal opportunities in relation to gender, race, class, special needs, gifted and talented, disability and belief;
- Promote a thoughtful attitude towards the immediate and wider environment;
- Enable pride in achievement and a desire to succeed;
- Develop effective links between the school, the pupils' home and the wider community which promote aspiration and high expectations.
- Understand their place and impact on the wider world.

We believe:

- Parents and carers have a crucial and constructive role to play in developing their pupil's learning.
- Pupils and staff value learning, the development of learning skills and the acquisition of knowledge.
- To learn, pupils must be involved in their own learning and understand what they need to do to improve.
- All staff have high expectations of pupils in terms of their learning.
- All pupils should be encouraged to develop enquiring minds.
- Quality learning is a result of quality teaching, which is itself informed by regular assessment and oral and written feedback.
- Quality learning is enhanced by a variety of teaching styles and strategies.
- Pupils should be encouraged by all staff to become increasingly independent learners.

### **Learning**

At Whitchurch Combined School we acknowledge that quality teaching will have a significant impact upon learning. In order to ensure we maintain high standards of learning we recognise that:

#### **1. Effective learning takes place when work is planned effectively.**

- Teachers set challenging learning objectives which are relevant to all pupils in their classes. These are based on knowledge of pupils' past and current achievement and the expected standards for pupils of the relevant age range.
- Teachers use these learning objectives to plan lessons, and sequences of lessons, showing how they will assess pupils' learning. They take account of and support pupils' varying needs so all pupils can make good progress.

- Teachers select and prepare resources, and plan for their safe and effective organisation, taking account of pupils' interests and their language and cultural backgrounds, with the help of support staff where appropriate.
- Teachers provide opportunities for a variety of learning experiences that cater for the learning styles of all pupils.
- Teachers plan for the deployment of additional adults who support pupils' learning.
- Teachers plan collaboratively with colleagues, where possible, sharing ideas and good practice freely.
- Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to learn in out-of-school contexts, such as school visits, museums, theatres and field-work with the help of other staff where appropriate.

## **2. Effective learning takes place when a good partnership is set up between home and school.**

- Homework is set according to the school's policy and in line with the guidelines for each particular year group.
- In KS1 reading books are changed on a weekly basis and the teacher is aware of the level and suitability of books being read.
- *In KS2 reading books are changed on a regular basis and relevant to individual pupil's needs. The teacher is aware of the level and suitability of books being read and an increased level of independence is promoted as children become self motivated readers.*
- Teachers respond promptly to requests from parents to resolve any issues.
- Teachers contact parents promptly if there are any issues with the pupil's learning or behaviour.
- Teachers monitor the completion of homework and contact parents promptly if this is not taking place.
- Teachers ensure homework is marked regularly.
- Teachers convey their expectations clearly to parents, through the first parents' meeting and subsequent Parents' Evening.

### **Role of Staff**

Teachers provide a broad and balanced curriculum, which will develop the skills, concepts and knowledge necessary for future learning.

We acknowledge that pupils learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to develop strategies that allow all pupils to learn in ways that best suit them. To promote this, we recognise that effective learning is a result of quality teaching. Therefore:

#### **1. Effective teaching takes place where teachers have good class management skills.**

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils and build successful relationships, centred on teaching and learning. They establish a purposeful learning environment where diversity is valued and where pupils feel secure and confident.
- Teachers teach clearly structured lessons or sequences of work which interest and motivate pupils and which:
  - start with a clear learning objective understood by all pupils
  - have a defined set of criteria for success
  - employ interactive teaching methods and collaborative group work
  - promote active and independent learning which enables pupils to think for themselves and to plan and manage their own learning.
- Teachers differentiate their teaching to meet the needs of pupils, including the more able and those with additional educational needs. They take account of the varying interests, experiences and achievements of all pupils.
- Teachers explain work in a way that pupils can understand, and check that the understanding is secure.
- Teachers ensure that pupils are given long enough to complete work, and have opportunities for working for sustained periods of time, appropriate to their age.
- Teachers set high expectations for pupils' behaviour and establish a clear framework for classroom discipline to anticipate and manage pupils' behaviour constructively, and promote self-control and independence.
- Teachers organise and manage teaching and learning time effectively.
- Teachers use ICT effectively in their teaching.
- Teachers secure a standard of behaviour that enables pupils to learn, and act to pre-empt and deal with inappropriate behaviour in the context of the behaviour policy of the school.

#### **2. Effective teaching takes place when teachers accurately monitor and assess pupil progress.**

- Teachers make appropriate use of a range of ongoing monitoring and assessment strategies to evaluate pupils' progress towards planned learning objectives, and use this information to improve their own planning and teaching.
- Teachers monitor and assess as they teach, giving immediate and constructive feedback to support pupils as they learn. They involve pupils in reflecting on, evaluating and improving their own performance.
- Teachers are able to assess pupils' progress accurately using, as relevant, the early learning goals, National Curriculum end of key stage statements or objectives from the national curriculum. They seek guidance from more experienced staff or subject leaders where appropriate. Refer to ARR policy.
- Teachers ensure that assessments take place in line with the school's assessment timetables and that deadlines for submitting results are adhered to.
- Teachers identify and support more able pupils, those who are working below age-related expectations, those who are failing to achieve their potential in learning, and those who experience behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. They seek guidance from more experienced staff or subject leaders where appropriate.
- Teachers record pupils' progress and achievements systematically to provide evidence of the range of their work, progress and attainment over time. They use this to help pupils review their own progress and to inform planning. Where appropriate, school data formats (electronic and paper-based) are used consistently.
- Teachers are able to use personal records and formal tools (Sonar Assessment) as a basis for reporting on pupils' attainment and progress orally and in writing, concisely, informatively and accurately for parents, carers, other professionals and pupils.

### **3. Effective teaching takes place in a stimulating, imaginative and informative learning environment.**

- Teachers organise and manage the physical teaching space, tools, materials, texts and other resources safely and effectively with the help of support staff where appropriate.
- All resources, equipment and materials are organised and clearly labelled so that pupils can be encouraged towards independent use of the majority of classroom resources.
- Resources are appropriate to the age of the pupils.
- Classrooms have an appropriate range of displays e.g.
  - Celebration of pupils work;
  - A variety of subjects;
  - Information / interactive displays to support pupils in their learning or stimulate their ideas.
- Classrooms are kept tidy with pupils taking responsibility for their own trays, desks and shared areas of the room.
- Teachers model expectations by organising and maintaining a high standard of tidiness with their own possessions and working areas.

### **4. Effective teaching takes place when teachers are organised and prepared.**

- Teachers have planning for the week prepared for the start of Monday morning.
- Copies of planning are given to Teaching Assistants.
- Resources needed for the lesson are prepared in advance of the start of the lesson.
- Resources prepared for pupils are of good quality.
- Teachers have effective time management skills and ask for support if needed.

### **5. Effective teaching takes place when teachers establish positive relationships with pupils and other adults.**

- Staff meet pupils punctually, and greet them at the start of the day and at the end of break and lunch times.
- Staff always listen to pupils.
- Positive encouragement is given to pupils at all times.
- Teachers provide Support Staff with a suitable method to enable feedback to inform their future planning.
- Teachers meet agreed deadlines without having to be reminded.

### **6. Effective teaching takes place when teachers establish clear routines with the pupils.**

- A timetable is displayed in the classroom, using pictures if necessary for younger pupils.
- Pupils are made aware of expectations with regard to setting out work and these are enforced.

- Pupils are aware of procedures to enable reading books to be changed quickly and efficiently.
- Teachers ensure homework procedures are clearly explained to the pupils and followed.

#### **7. Effective teaching takes place when teachers have high expectations of all pupils.**

- Teachers have high expectations of all pupils regardless of ability and do not accept work that is poorly completed or presented. Pupils are made aware of these expectations.
- Teachers work with their class to set out expectations in terms of behaviour, by discussing and reinforcing Whitchurch's Vision: Growing today, ready for tomorrow; and Values: Be kind, Respectful, Proud, Resilient, and Curious.
- Teachers demonstrate and promote these expectations by their own attitude and behaviour.
- High standards are set when work is modelled to the pupils e.g. in terms of handwriting, spelling and presentation generally.

#### **8. Effective teaching takes place when the work given to pupils stimulates them, and the pupils enjoy their learning.**

- Teachers show enthusiasm for what they are teaching and convey a positive message about the value of learning.
- Teachers find out what the pupils already know as a starting point for work, and build on this.
- Teachers actively seek those 'Eureka' moments within the pupils, the point when their learning has an impact upon their understanding.
- Planning takes place within the framework of the school's medium term plans, which are amended to suit the particular needs of that class.
- Planning is aimed at providing a range of activities throughout the week and at accommodating different learning styles.
- Planning demonstrates that work is differentiated for different ability groups within the class.
- Each lesson is planned with a clear learning objective.
- Teachers evaluate the effectiveness of lessons and amend future lessons accordingly.

#### **9. Effective teaching takes place when teachers have secure subject knowledge.**

- Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subjects they are trained to teach.
- For the Foundation Stage, teachers know and understand the aims and principles of the Foundation Stage Curriculum.
- For Key Stage 1 and/or 2, teachers know and understand the curriculum for each of the National Curriculum core subjects, and how this links to the school's curriculum.
- They have sufficient understanding of a range of work across the foundation subjects to be able to teach them in the age range for which they are trained, with advice from colleagues where necessary.
- Teachers ensure that they are aware of expectations, typical curricula and teaching arrangements in the Key Stages or phases before and after the ones they are trained to teach.
- Teachers ensure that they keep up to date with their subject knowledge.
- Teachers show a commitment to their professional development by (i) identifying areas in which they need to improve their professional knowledge, understanding and practice in order to teach more effectively in their current post, and (ii) with support, taking steps to address these needs.
- Teachers join in with professional discussions set up through staff meetings or training days.
- Teachers know how to use ICT effectively, both to teach their subject and to support their wider professional role.

#### **10. Effective teaching takes place when teachers work effectively with pupils who have additional educational needs.**

- Teachers understand their responsibilities for pupils with additional educational needs set out under the *SEND Code of Practice*, and know how to seek advice from specialists on less common types of additional educational needs.
- Teachers complete and review provision maps in consultation with the pupils, Learning Support Assistant and SENCO, and then discuss these with parents. Provision Maps are completed in line with time scales set by the SENCO.

- Teachers ensure that targets set in the provision map are worked towards and that pupils make progress against these targets.
- Teachers identify any pupils who are gifted and talented within their class. They ensure that these pupils are on the school's Gifted and Talented register and that steps are taken to address their needs, if appropriate, in school.

### **Equal Opportunities**

In accordance with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy all pupils at Whitchurch Combined School must be given full access to the National Curriculum. Staff will endeavour to help all pupils to reach their full potential irrespective of race, gender, age or ability.

*Please refer to Equal Opportunities Policy*

### **Inclusion and SEND**

The school provides a positive, inclusive atmosphere for all pupils. All pupils, regardless of academic ability, are able to make good progress with the right support. At Whitchurch Combined School we ensure that each pupil is assessed accordingly and, should the need arise, extra support is provided. Teaching Assistants support the learning of pupils with Special Educational Needs, as outlined in their Support Plans.

### **Teaching Assistants**

The tasks of the Teaching Assistant are determined by the Headteacher, Deputy, SENCO and class teacher and reviewed, at least, annually. Teaching Assistants undertake annual performance management reviews and are encouraged to attend relevant training courses to develop their expertise.

Currently, Teaching Assistants are used to give extra support where it is needed across the school either with individual pupils or with small groups. Plans are fully explained to the Teaching Assistants who will be expected to implement these, seeking advice and clarification where needed, to promote and support learning.

### **Effective Use of Time**

Teachers encourage pupils to work within given time scales, and will facilitate the effective use of time through the provision of:

- appropriate resources within an orderly, calm working environment
- extension activities, which can be carried out by individuals or groups of pupils.

Pupils deemed not to be working well within class will be expected to complete the work during break times or take it home.

Time out for inappropriate behaviour will have to be made up by the pupil at a time designated by the teacher. This should not encroach upon other lesson time.

### **Time Allocation per Week**

- *Recommended taught time for KS2 – 23.5 hrs per week (exclusive of registration, collective worship, breaks and lunch)*
- *Recommended taught time for KS1 – 21 hrs per week (exclusive of registration, collective worship, breaks and lunch)*
- *In addition to a daily maths and literacy lesson in all key stages and a weekly science lesson in KS2, staff will ensure a balance of all other non-core subjects are covered throughout their curriculum topics.*
- *French will be taught in KS2.*

### **Assessment**

As detailed in our Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy, assessment is essential to, and an integral part of effective learning and teaching. The purpose of assessment is to provide information for a range of audiences. It is used to:

- Gather information about the performance of individual pupils, groups and cohorts of pupils so that it can be used to inform target setting and pupil expectations.
- Gather information to inform teachers what needs to be taught next.
- Provide information to inform the school's strategic planning.
- Track individual progress.

The EYFS, summative assessment tests, Sonar Assessment and teacher assessment are used to inform judgements on the attainment and progress of pupils.

Further information can be found in our Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy.

### **Assessment for Learning**

Whitchurch is committed to Assessment for Learning. We believe that in order to be effective, assessment needs to be a partnership between teacher and pupils.

Assessment for Learning manifests itself in the following ways:

- **Lesson Objectives** – are displayed and shared with the pupils for each lesson
- **Success Criteria** – specific and focused success criteria are made clear and whenever possible these are created by the pupils. In this way our pupils are clear about both what is expected of them and what they are being assessed on. It has been agreed these will be clearly displayed for each lesson.
- **Response to Feedback** – whether written or verbal, from teachers or peers, pupils are regularly given the opportunity to revisit and improve their work in the context of the feedback.
- **Self assessment** – is regularly used in the context of the success criteria. Evaluation cards may be used for assessment during the plenary session.
- **Talk partners / Think time** – pupils are given the opportunity to clarify their thoughts through 'talk partners' and 'think time'. In this way we ensure that the pupils' responses are being assessed, not their ability to speak publicly or to react under pressure.
- **Peer assessment** – is used regularly in the context of the success criteria. Peers may indicate aspects of the work which is good and an aspect to improve. They may use teacher prepared assessment grids.
- **Interactive lessons** – teachers will regularly assess the understanding of the class as a whole through various interactive strategies e.g. small whiteboards; number fans; thumbs up / down.
- **No hands up** – pupils may be selected by the drawing of their name from a pot to answer questions – 'Lolly Pops'. This ensures that all pupils are attentive and avoids the same few pupils always answering and should feature in most lessons.

### **Behaviour management**

For effective learning to take place pupil behaviour must be good. Pupils should be made aware of how their behaviour affects both their own and others' learning. It is our aim to develop in pupils a sense of self-discipline and an acceptance of responsibility for their own actions. We endeavour to create the conditions for an orderly community where effective learning can take place, and in which there is mutual respect between all members, and where there is proper concern for the environment.

As detailed in the behaviour management policy, staff will implement agreed sanctions and rewards. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to manage the pupils' behaviour. Learning Support Assistants should encourage positive behaviour and if pupils are not responding they should be referred directly to the teacher.

*Refer to Behaviour policy for further detail.*

### **Role of Governors**

Our Governors support, monitor, review and agree the school's policies on Learning and Teaching. In particular, they:

- Support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively
- Monitor how effective learning and teaching strategies are in terms of raising pupil achievement
- Ensure that the school buildings and premises are effective in supporting successful learning and teaching

- Ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching
- Monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations
- Monitor the effectiveness of learning and teaching policies through the school self-review processes. These include the Headteacher's reports to governors and the work of the curriculum and school improvement committees.

### **Role of Parents**

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping their pupils to learn. We work hard to inform and support parents in how they can help further their pupils' learning and confidence at school. Parents' consultation meetings with teachers are held to discuss progress and strategies for further improvement.

The school sends information to parents at the start of the school year about the programmes each pupils will be following in Literacy, Numeracy and in the Foundation subjects (in Foundation Stage information about Early Learning goals). Information about homework expectations is also sent at this time so that parents know what will be given to pupils each week.

Parents receive a detailed school report in July. This outlines the pupils' achievements during the year, how they are achieving relative to age related expectations and how they can improve and develop in the future. Parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns they have with teachers.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that pupils attend school regularly. Holidays during term time should be avoided as these interrupt the pupils' progress and they miss important work and may fall behind. Parents are asked to inform the school of any absence on the first day (telephone answer phone available) so that we know that they are safe at home.

M Soar: September 2025

Review date: September 2026