



The Federation of St. Giles' and St. Andrew's C of E Primary Schools

Teaching and Learning Policy



At St. Giles' and St Andrew's C of E Primary Schools we are committed to high quality teaching and learning to raise standards of achievement for all children. This policy summarises expectations and common working practices.

It reflects what has been agreed in terms of approach and consistency and makes explicit the best practice to which the schools aspire. It also reflects the aims and objectives of the schools and supports their vision.

At St. Giles' and St. Andrew's C of E Primary Schools, we are curious, excited and really love to learn. As Christian school communities, we support each other through our shared values to become robust, independent learners who persevere, have the courage and confidence to be creative and imaginative, care for one another and the communities we live in. Our schools are inclusive, making every one of us welcome. They set us suitable learning challenges and respond to our needs, ensuring that we reach our potential and 'be the best we can be'.

Principles of teaching and learning

Learning is the purpose of the whole school and is a shared commitment. At St. Giles' and St. Andrew's C of E Primary Schools we recognise that education involves children, parents, staff, governors, the community, diocese and the local authority, and that for optimum benefit all should work closely together to support the process of learning.

Working in partnership, we aim to:

- provide a supportive, positive, healthy, caring and safe environment, which has high expectations and values all members of the school community;
- recognise the needs and aspirations of all individuals and provide opportunities for all pupils to make the best possible progress and attain the highest personal achievements;
- ensure children can flourish as individuals within a broad, balanced, exciting and challenging curriculum;
- provide rich and varied experiences for pupils to acquire, develop and apply a broad range of knowledge, skills and understanding;
- provide a curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, physical, mental and emotional development of the pupils;
- develop individuals with lively, enquiring minds, good thinking skills, self-respect, self-discipline and positive attitudes;
- encourage all children to be enthusiastic and committed learners, promoting their self-esteem, self-worth and emotional well-being;
- develop children's confidence and capacity to learn and work independently and collaboratively;
- develop enduring values of respect, honesty, equality, integrity, tolerance, fairness and trust within a Christian framework;
- encourage children to respond positively to the opportunities, challenges and responsibilities of a rapidly changing world;
- encourage children to value the diversity in our society and the environment in which they live including those of faith and those of none;

- encourage children to become active and responsible citizens, contributing positively to the community and society.

As a school, we are committed to our mission statement – ‘be the best we can be’

Ethos

The Christian ethos and atmosphere underpin the agreed aims of the school. In the course of their daily work the staff will contribute to the development of this ethos through:

- providing a calm and effective working environment, in which each child can produce his or her best work;
- providing a welcoming environment, in which courtesy, kindness and respect are fostered;
- providing positive role models;
- providing a fair and disciplined environment, in line with the school’s behaviour policy;
- effective management of their professional time;
- developing links with all stakeholders and the wider community;
- valuing and celebrating pupils’ success and achievements;
- reviewing personal and professional development in order to ensure a high level of professional expertise.

Roles and Responsibilities

Learning and teaching is a shared responsibility and all members of the school community have an important part to play.

All members of the school community should work towards the school’s aims by:

- esteeming 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, behaviours and work;
- working as a team, supporting and encouraging one another.

Teachers will endeavour to:

- provide a challenging and stimulating curriculum designed to encourage all children to reach the highest standard of achievement;
- recognise and be aware of the needs of each individual child according to ability and aptitude;
- ensure that learning is progressive and continuous;
- be good role models, punctual, well prepared and organised;
- keep up-to-date with educational issues;
- provide clear information on school procedures and pupil progress;
- have a positive attitude to change and the development of their own expertise;
- establish links with the local community to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life;

- work collaboratively with all involved in education to develop a shared philosophy and commonality of practice.

Parents are encouraged to support their child's learning by:

- ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, well-rested and in good health;
- ensuring that their child arrives at school wearing the correct uniform and bringing necessary equipment;
- providing support for the discipline within the school and for the teacher's role;
- supporting the work of educational targets and becoming actively involved in the implementation of any support programme;
- participating in discussions concerning their child's progress and attainment;
- ensuring early contact with school to discuss matters which affect a child's happiness, progress and behaviour;
- support the school's homework policy and give due importance to any homework;
- ensuring that all contact addresses and telephone numbers are up to date and correct;
- allowing their child to become increasingly independent as they progress throughout the school;
- informing the school of reasons for their child's absence;

Pupils are encouraged to support the school's aims by:

- attending school regularly and punctually;
- being organised, bringing necessary equipment, taking letters home promptly, etc;
- conducting themselves in an orderly manner in line with the expected behaviour policy;
- taking increased responsibility for their own learning.

The community is invited to support the school by:

- contributing to activities, such as assemblies, church services, specialist outings, clubs, etc;
- presenting themselves as positive role models to be emulated;
- organising activities and events throughout the year to extend and deepen pupils' knowledge and skills;
- supporting school events;
- voluntarily helping in the classroom.

Planning

The foundation for curricular development is the School Development Plan, developed through a process of collaboration between staff, and approved by governors.

At St. Giles' and St. Andrew's C of E Primary Schools we are committed to following the programmes of study as required by the National Curriculum 2014. Staff collaborated to design a creative curriculum with whole school topics. It has been carefully balanced to ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum, PSHE and RE. We follow a cross curricular approach to learning where some subjects are taught through a topic and some are covered as discrete subjects. Regular staff meetings are used to discuss various aspects of the curriculum and ensure consistency of approach and standards.

Planning takes place half-termly, with reference to the National Curriculum 2014, Early Years Foundation Stage and the Whole School Curriculum Overview. Swimming instruction with specialist teachers takes place at the local swimming pool in upper Key Stage 2

Plans are based upon previous assessment data, pupil need and subject expectation and are well matched to activities to ensure that sufficient progress is made during lessons and over time. Curriculum time can be planned as continuous study throughout the term, or as blocks of study.

Subject leadership: As a small school leadership of subjects has a more collaborative approach

Teachers are encouraged to develop their leadership skills by taking the lead in a subject area. The Deputy Headteacher is the overall curriculum leader.

The Deputy Headteacher:

- takes the lead in policy development and the production of schemes of work designed to ensure progression and continuity of subjects throughout the school;
- supports colleagues in their development and implementation of the scheme of work, and in assessment and record-keeping activities;
- using release time to support colleagues;
- keeps up-to-date through reading and attending relevant courses.

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher monitors progress across the curriculum sharing responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central resources for different subjects;

Organisation

The learning environment will be managed in such a way as to facilitate different styles of learning.

These would include:

- whole class teaching;
- group work, organised according to appropriate criteria (i.e. ability, mixed ability, friendship, etc);
- one to one teaching;
- sliding input to cater for different learning abilities;
- collaborative learning in pairs or groups;
- independent learning and self-determined learning

All areas of the learning environment will be planned for, including, where appropriate, the outside areas, in order to ensure opportunities for a range of practical activities, which will develop appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding.

Classroom Environment

The classroom will be organised to facilitate learning and the development of independence. For example:

- resources in each area will be grouped according to curriculum subject;
- book corners will be comfortable and attractive;
- displays and resources should be labelled;
- areas for imaginative play will change regularly, in order to give opportunities for a range of play and role-play which will contribute to learning in a purposeful manner;

- pupils will be involved in the maintenance and care of all equipment and resources.
- Classrooms provide a stimulating and purposeful learning environment, including thought provoking and stimulating displays as well as celebrating achievement and progress;

Classroom Support

Support for learners is available from the Support Staff Team. These are used at the discretion of the class teacher. Volunteer helpers assist with the many aspects of school life, including supporting reading and providing assistance with school visits. Students are welcomed into school and certain standards of dress and conduct are expected.

Achievement

Children are encouraged to do their best and to achieve their potential. Effort, determination and perseverance are recognised in display, awards and messages home. School events such as performances, assemblies, open day and visits in to school are used for children to show their achievements.

We recognise children through;

- Classroom awards such as 'star of the week'
- Marvellous Me badges, postcards and messages
- Weekly Headteacher Award which includes, certificate, badge, prose and newsletter photo
- Weekly mathematician award which includes certificate, prize, work displayed and newsletter photo
- Lunch time house tokens 'Houses count' for good behaviour, manners and trying foods

Differentiation

So that we always have the highest possible expectations of individual learners and so they can demonstrate what they can do, understand and achieve, teachers will differentiate the curriculum according to individual needs by:

- pace;
- content;
- task;
- relevance;
- resources;
- extension;
- autonomy;
- outcome;
- teacher/adult support.

Differentiated tasks will be detailed in weekly planning. Learning objectives will be specified for all differentiated teaching and reference will be made in weekly plans to Individual Education Plans where appropriate.

Pupils with special educational needs receive support provided by a learning support assistant under the guidance of the class teacher, Assistant SENCo and SENCo.

Additionally, advice is sought from relevant external support agencies when and where the need demands it.

Homework

Homework is considered to be a valuable element of the learning process.

At St. Giles' we use a graduated approach to homework which aims to build basic skills, reinforce learning and offer a variety of tasks that will encourage learners to investigate, create and calculate.

Each teacher sets homework each week appropriately according to age and stage. We expect that as children move through the school, homework should be an increasingly independent task. Teachers support pupils to take responsibility for organising and completing work in preparation for secondary school.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Regular assessments are made of pupils' work in order to establish the level of attainment and to inform future planning. 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.

Formal summative assessment is carried out at the end of each National Curriculum Key Stage (i.e. in Years 2 and 6) through the use of SATs and teacher assessment. Phonics are tested in Year 1 and re-tested where necessary in Year 2. Optional tests are also taken in Years 3, 4 and 5. Initial assessment is used in Reception/Early Years within six weeks of starting school and Foundation Stage Profiles are maintained.

Suitable tasks for assessment include:

- group discussions;
- short tests in which pupils write answers;
- specific assignments for individual pupils;
- discussions in which children are encouraged to appraise their own work and progress;
- pupil observations;
- SATs.
- Feedback to pupils about their own progress is achieved through discussion and the marking of work.

Effective marking helps children understand what they have done well and how to improve their work. See Marking Policy

Parents are engaged in an ongoing dialogue about their children's welfare, achievements and next steps. They are invited in to school to a consultation with the teacher twice a year and once through a written report in the Spring term. The summer term meeting is held on open day where parents and children are invited to a 'learning fair' in the school hall. Results of individual pupils' assessments are made available to the parents concerned and the overall results (but not individual results) are made available to parents, governors, LA and national government.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Pupils' work will be monitored and moderated regularly in each of the core curriculum areas by the Deputy and Headteacher. A half termly review of pupil progress is held with teachers which includes discussions around our whole school provision and the impact of the interventions that are used. The Deputy Headteacher and Headteacher regularly monitor children's books. The Headteacher will observe each class teacher in a specified curriculum area on a regular basis. The Performance Management cycle informs learning and teaching.

Teaching Strategies and Styles

- In order to ensure equality of access and effective matching of tasks to needs, teachers will employ a variety of teaching strategies in any one session. This will include:
- discussion and questioning (open and closed as appropriate);
- interactive teaching;
- listening;
- brainstorming;
- providing opportunities for reflection by pupils;
- demonstrating high expectations;
- providing opportunities for repetition/reinforcement;
- providing encouragement, positive reinforcement and praise;
- making judgements and responding to individual need;
- intervening, as appropriate, in the learning process in order to ensure progress;
- providing all children with opportunities for success;
- using a range of communication strategies – verbal and non-verbal.

Activities should show a balance in terms of individual, group and whole class work and should encourage children to take an active role in their learning through:

- investigative work is used;
- communicating findings in a variety of ways;
- decision making and to take responsibility, along with staff, for their own learning.

At St. Giles' C of E Primary School we recognise the importance of key skills. Opportunities will be made available across the curriculum to develop:

- application of number;
- communication;
- computing skills
- problem solving;
- working with others;
- improving own learning and performance.

Thinking skills will also be developed across the curriculum. This will include:

- creative thinking;
- enquiry;
- information processing;
- reasoning;
- evaluation.

We recognise that each child has a unique way of learning and that learning preference is affected by previous experience, competence, confidence, beliefs and values. We shall ensure that learning is accessed by as many means as possible, e.g. VAK. Staff are aware of a range of theories and research linked to learning including encouraging a 'Growth Mindset'.

Ready for learning

Children learn best when

- they are happy, healthy and alert – receptive and positive
- they are interested and involved – learning is relevant and stimulating
- the purpose of a task is understood – they understand why they are doing it
- they feel secure – in terms of environment, relationships and learning
- they feel valued – teachers and other adults care about their development as learners
- they have opportunities to explore and take risks
- they are actively involved, making choices and taking responsibility in their learning
- they have an element of control and can work with independence
- they receive positive feedback and praise for achievements
- the learning environment is well-organised and resources are easily accessed
- tasks are differentiated, matched to the child
- learning is built on existing knowledge and experience – clearly defined small steps
- they have opportunities to talk about their work, reflecting, discussing and sharing ideas
- the teacher is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and motivated

The pastoral support team actively work to support children to be as ready and prepared as they can be for learning. This includes

- additional lunchtime provision
- access to an emotional First aider
- access to the FAST team: Family Support workers
- Christian Youth Outreach lunch time club
- use of Pass cards
- quiet areas
- Staff available at lunch time

All staff have received bereavement training and have an awareness of 'Maslow's hierarchy of needs'

Visits and Visitors

The curriculum is enhanced at St. Giles' and St Andrew's C of E Primary Schools through planned visits and by well chosen visitors to the school.

The schools are committed to being a Forest School. Children from each school go to the woods once a fortnight.

Last reviewed: September 2016