

Fleecefield Primary School

Learning and Teaching Policy



Currently being updated

To be reviewed by autumn 2017

Aims of Fleecefield Primary School

Our aim at Fleecefield is to provide a secure, positive and happy atmosphere where all children and adults are expected to develop to their full potential.

We aim to provide an inclusive environment, which values all children and does not discriminate against them in any way.

We expect that all our pupils will gain full access to a broad, creative and stimulating curriculum with high quality teaching and learning.

We aim to extend and develop each child's experience to help them to develop inquiring minds, with which to make sense of the world we live in.

We have high expectations of the children in our care and aim to provide an education best suited to their individual needs.

We believe that it is essential for all of us, adults and children alike, to respond with consideration and respect for each other.

It is central to our Behaviour Policy that adults focus their attention on children's good efforts and we actively reward achievements with praise and encouragement.

We expect that parents will work in partnership with us to promote children's progress and success.

Together we will create a learning environment where everyone believes that they can be valuable contributors to their community and to a global society.

Fleecefield is a multi-cultural school, and we aim to value the cultural diversity of our pupils and society. We aim to encourage positive cultural/ethnic self-identity in the children, to raise awareness and mutual respect of cultural differences, and to challenge any form of racism and eliminate it. Our expectations of pupils, no matter what their origin should be similar.

Successful teaching and learning at Fleecefield is characterised by the following objectives:

- To provide a learning environment that is safe, secure, calm, positive and focussed on success and achievement for all.
- To provide an environment which promotes the development of motivation, confidence and self-esteem?
- To ensure that the aim is clear in all we do.
- To ensure the children are actively involved in their own learning.
- To ensure that the resources and activities provided lead to an extension of present capabilities and encourage further realistic expectations.
- To ensure that opportunities are provided for the learner to experiment and re-evaluate in a constructive way.
- To ensure that as teachers we share support and enthusiasm for the success of the learner.
- To provide structured opportunities for children to develop a sense of self-discipline and responsibility within the wider context of the school community.

- To provide opportunities for the learner to become teacher and the teacher to be a learner.
- To ensure that children are aware that learning is learnable by teaching a set of principles and skills that help learners learn more effectively and so become learners for life (Learning2Learn see Appendix 1).
- To ensure that children have access to Personalised Learning programmes (see Appendix 2).

APPROACHES TO LEARNING:

A selection of ways to approach learning:

1. Enabling independent learning:

- Through encouraging initiative, interest and enthusiasm.
- Through encouraging pride in their work.
- Through developing confidence in approaching tasks unaided.
- Through open ended activities involving exploration and tactile experiences.
- Through making choices, and sequencing right choices.
- Through imitating role models or peers.
- Through self-evaluation.
- Through learning to work constructively under pressure of time.
- Through the acquisition of basic study skills such as:
 - Using external sources of information.
 - Questioning.
 - Planning ahead.
 - Making critical observations.

2. Enabling co-operative learning:

- Through exchanging ideas, making decisions and developing group identity.
- By listening, compromising, negotiating and making decisions.
- By sharing and turn-taking and adopting roles within the group.
- Through coping with failure and self-regulation.
- By displaying empathy, sympathy and respect.
- Through valuing the work of others.
- By being involved in democratic processes-decision making, voting and electing., predict and evaluate
- By evaluation of group dynamics.
- Through experience of observation and feedback.

3. Enabling learning through direct experience:

- Through play activities.
- By taking risks in a safe environment.
- Through role play.
- Through learning experiences in the outdoor and indoor curriculum.
- Through experimentation and investigation.

- By learning to hypothesise, predict and evaluate.
- Through physical and sensual activities.
- By learning to solve practical problems with real materials.

4. Enabling learning through problem solving and investigation:

- Through offering children real purposes for learning.
- By applying previous learning to new problems.
- By evaluating investigations and combining thinking from several sources.
- By experimentation using judgement and opinion.
- By discovering that there is not always a right answer.
- Through learning to make mistakes and being able to learn from them.

PUPIL GROUPINGS FOR LEARNING:

Children need opportunities to work individually, as a whole class and in a variety of groupings. These depend on the needs of the class and the curriculum. Teachers will create classroom environments that facilitate learning through the use of a range of teaching strategies that support Learning 2 Learn (see Appendix 1).

The children are grouped following Geoff Hannan's recommendations (see Appendix 3)

The pupil groupings defined:

1. INDIVIDUALLY

Children work individually in order to develop their own individual learning skills and enjoyment of the subject.

2. IN FRIENDSHIP PAIRINGS AND GROUPINGS

Children work with a friend in some lessons in order to learn to:

- Help one another and work co-operatively.
- To develop their communication skills.
- To learn "experientially"- to learn through doing things themselves and with others.

3. IN NON-FRIENDSHIP PAIRINGS AND GROUPINGS

Children are assigned work and talk partners according to the judgement of the teacher. They could be mixed-gender, mixed ethnicity or mixed ability in order to

- Learn about and co-operate with people of a different gender, ability or culture from their own.
- Further develop their communication skills. (We use differing communication skills with our friends and with others we are not as close to).
- Develop new friendships.

4. IN ATTAINMENT LEVEL GROUPS

Each one of us is better at some things than at other things. During these times the children will be working to improve the things that they find most difficult in their learning.

It is not a case of being better or worse than others in the class. It is about having different needs in achieving their very best in a specific subject.

5. WHOLE CLASS WORK

Whole class work often has elements of group, independent and individual work as an integral part of the organisation of the lesson.

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

First-hand experience of the local community and environment should be an integral part of the curriculum. Use of the school and grounds as a learning environment through the outdoor curriculum will be resourced and developed.

The school environment should:

- Reflect the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural nature of society and our local community.
- Reflect the linguistic diversity present in the school.
- Value the range of different people within our society.
- Reflect the variety of roles it is possible for women and men to take in society.
- Be attractive, stimulating and well-organised.
- Show high standards of care and attention to domestic hygiene.
- Celebrate high standards of achievement through displays.
- Offer opportunities for extension of learning and stimulate interest through interactive displays.
- Be organised so that information and resources for learning are clearly labelled, well organised and accessible for all.
- Include "working walls" (see Appendix 4)

THE ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL:

The aims of the school should be evident through the ethos of the school. This will be characterised by the following:

- People have open and confident relationships.
- Children and adults are respected for their individuality.
- Learning is what this school is about- we all see this as central to all we do.
- People care about each other and the school as a successful community.
- Everyone has a voice in the school and has a contribution to make to its success.
- Making mistakes is an accepted part of the learning process.
- Fleecefield School is not a building, it is a learning community.

Other related policies and guidelines:

- Home Learning Policy
- Classroom Organisation Guidelines
- Class Notice Board Guidelines
- Feedback and Assessment Policy
- Community Cohesion
- Display Policy
- Schemes of work
- New Primary Framework
- Inclusion Policy

Appendix 1

Use of L2L strategies to encourage good learning

THE TEACHER'S TOOLKIT

- 5 R's of life-long learning
- Brain Gym
- Mind Maps
- TASC wheel
- Learning Objectives and Success Criteria
- Learning Styles/Multiple Intelligences
- Emotional Intelligence
- Learning Environment/Working Walls/Music
- Questioning in different ways
- Community of Inquiry
- Paired Learning/Talk partners
- The Seven Keys to unlock memory
- Sleep, food, water
- Take 10
- Accelerated Learning
- Developing Thinking Skills
- Solution focussed brief therapy (SFBT)
- Fiddle toys
- Sports stacking
- Jigsawing
- Apply/teach/apply
- Group roles
- Interactive whiteboard
- Music
- Scaffolding
- Modelling and Demonstrating

PERSONALISED LEARNING

At Fleecefield the children have access to many Personalised Learning initiatives.

FOUNDATION STAGE

- Early Years Social Inclusion (EYSI)
- Nurture Group (NESTT)

KEY STAGE ONE

- Speech and Language
- Early Literacy Support (ELS)
- Every Child a Reader
- Nurture Group (NESTT)
- Tiger Team (developing motor skills)
- Mentoring
- Cooking Skills

KEY STAGE TWO

- Maths Springboard
- Additional Literacy Support
- Writing Focus Groups
- Numeracy Focus Groups
- Pre-teaching in Numeracy
- Speech and Language
- Spelling Groups
- Phonics Support Groups
- Advanced bi-lingual project in Numeracy
- Art Therapy
- Cooking Skills
- Mentoring

THE EXTENDED SCHOOL

- Turkish Club
- Breakfast Club
- Football Coaching
- Thinking Club
- Art Club
- Toy Club
- First Steps
- Monday to Thursday Club
- French Club

- Parent Trainers

A THIRD, A THIRD, A THIRD

STRUCTURING PAIR AND GROUP WORK

This is quite possibly the most important strategy you can apply for improving children's performance. I recommend that, of your group work, one third should be friendship pairings and groupings; one third in single-gender non-friendship pairings and groupings; and one third in mixed-gender pairings and groupings. And this should take the form of a "rolling programme" of such group work so that during the time-span of half a term, all pupils work in a structured way with every other pupil in the class.

What one mostly sees in schools is informal friendship pairings in the classroom. Children who are friends with one-another sit together and, although working individually, are allowed to communicate if they need to.

If you take one worksheet or book away and instruct them to work together on the task you are now into Proximal Learning and new opportunities for skills development open up...

RATIONALE

There are fundamentally two ways that children (and for that matter, adults as well) learn anything: individually and "proximally," i.e. together with another child.

If you listen in on two children working together on a task you may readily appreciate the importance and the unique qualities of this type of learning. They are explaining things to one-another in appropriate language and discussing new concepts at their level of comprehension. In short, they are extending their conceptual understanding and learning skills on a pupil-centred level that the adult would find difficult, if not impossible, to communicate on. Consider learning something new and difficult yourself. Clearly you would need a good teacher. But also consider the added benefits of having another new learner working with you in unravelling, say, a new and difficult concept.

In the school classroom there are also many other benefits to this approach.

When two boys work together on a task inevitably one will take the lead and the other will follow, with little language interaction between them. Put that boy with a girl and you will find much more communication will take place. Analyse the quality of the communication and you will soon discover that the boy is now having to be REFLECTIVE and the girl SPECULATIVE, helping to compensate for likely gender disadvantage. The boy is having to defend his highly confident yet, quite probably, highly dubious speculations and reappraise them! The girl is demanded to be speculative: to extend beyond what to her are easy reflections into presenting and justifying alternative propositions. The upshot is that both are now enhancing and developing core language and learning skills. Simultaneously you are helping the boy to extend his social skills.

Apply the A THIRD, A THIRD, A THIRD pluralism to this process and you are giving all students in the class periodic and structured access to the high-order language and learning skills of the most gifted. This is a mutually enriching access. A high-attaining student in helping a low-attaining student is learning to simplify, express and explain their understandings. Ironically, one of the ways we actually learn most effectively is through teaching! In teaching someone else we have to structure and sequence our own understandings and express them in a form that is easily accessible. Consider the importance of this skill to examinations! Remember, however, A THIRD, A THIRD, A THIRD means that the most able are also working together to consolidate and extend their own high-level skills.

In applying THIRD- THIRD-THIRD you are also developing a classroom environment that is effective in developing girls' confidence. Structured access to working with boys will help to develop especially the girls' self-assertion skills and their ability to deal with male dominance and attention-seeking.

IMPROVING BEHAVIOUR

In structuring group work in this way you are also facilitating good behaviour in the classroom. You will find that A THIRD, A THIRD, A THIRD works in two ways for producing an easier classroom to manage.

It breaks up the blocks of potentially troublesome friendship groups of boys which give teachers most irritation. For two-thirds of the group work time they are not physically together with their friends and are required to co-operative with other pupils in the class.

Importantly, as well, you are helping all students in your class to feel more confident and comfortable with one another. You will find after a while that there will be far fewer "put-downs" and that the students will be getting on much better with one another. A THIRD, A THIRD, A THIRD is a fundamental anti-bullying practice and for similar reasons a highly important antiracist and anti-sexist strategy.

Sadly two children may be in the same class with one another for five years without once ever working together. What practical use are our antiracist policies when, for example, Asian and White students are never actively encouraged to work together? Neither will boys and girls work together unless we demand it. The class remains too often a group of strangers. You have the opportunity in your classroom to develop something far more important than learning your subject. You have the opportunity to develop tolerance and respect between the sexes and the races!

One final point. The children who most need to develop their social experience and interpersonal skills in this way are the ones least likely to be given the opportunities. Group work is perceived to be more trouble than it's worth with the more challenging "working class" child (and boy specifically!) One observes far more group work in schools with a "middle class" catchment. All children need access to these competencies. Here's how...

MANAGING THE DEVELOPMENT

It is recommended that you begin to work in this way from scratch with a new Year-7 or with an older class that you have established a good relationship with. If you are not used to working in this way then use the strategy with just one of your Year-7 classes for one whole term to train yourself.

Then you'll be able to adopt it with your other Year-7s. Best of all is to have a Departmental Policy to support the practice.

Sit this new Year-7 class, initially, boy-girl around the room. Immediately you will find the classroom calmer and easier to manage. Then it is important to tell the class at the outset how and why you intend to use A THIRD, A THIRD, A THIRD. A good way of doing this is to display a poster and discuss it in detail with your class, proactively confronting their reservations. After all it's only their embarrassment!

PAIR WORK INTO GROUP WORK

'The best size of a working group is four (an exception to "going for five!") When you have five in the group it is easy for one pupil to take a "back seat" whilst the others engage. I have noticed that with four to a group if one tries to opt out then the others will get him/her working again.

Always go through a pair work step in your lesson and then join up the pairs to form your small groups. This way you will find that the groups gel better and all children participate more equally in the task. The group is now two sets of pairs rather than four individuals thrown cold into the activity.

To ensure variety and to improve their learning all children need access to the following:

- Single Gender Attainment Level Groups
- Mixed Gender Attainment Level Groups
- Single Gender Mixed Attainment Level Groups
- Mixed Gender Mixed Attainment Level Groups

Appendix 4

WORKING WALLS

Working walls are displays for literacy and numeracy which support children's learning. Working walls make use of a visible display of outcomes, modelled examples and success criteria. This approach enables children to know what they are learning and how this learning process develops over a period of time.