Teaching and Learning Policy

Aim of the Academy

To provide unique and enriching opportunities for all.

Guiding principles: At Parlaunt Park Primary Academy we recognise that quality classroom practice is the key to improving learning and pupil achievement. Where learning is engaging, exciting and motivating pupils will make at least good progress. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the National Curriculum are the basic elements at the heart of our learning.

This policy aims to underline the fundamental principles/ set out the criteria for teaching and learning at our school. To be effective, this policy does not stand alone; it must be embedded into our classroom practice and be read in conjunction with:
- EYFS Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Homework Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

Aims at Parlaunt Park Primary Academy:

- To produce happy, engaged and motivated learners
- To ensure pupils achieve their potential in all aspects of school life
- For pupils to develop a responsible and independent approach to their work
- To set high expectations for pupils achievements
- To continuously improve the quality of teaching and learning, and raise standards so that all pupils make at least good progress

Characteristics of effective lessons:

At Parlaunt Park Primary Academy we understand that all children learn differently. Therefore we aim to ensure that all children have the opportunity to succeed, be challenged and motivated within lessons. Where barriers to learning occur class teachers have a wide range of strategies to help support or extend the children in their learning. A wide variety of learning experiences will inevitably help all children in their learning.

Lessons are planned to meet the needs of learners
- Lessons are interactive with children actively learning (eg Think-pair-share, responding to questions)
- Learning is connected with previous work
- In whole class lessons, learning objectives are explained and what success will look like, shared
- Information and learning is presented using a range of resources

- Pupils are given opportunities to develop their own understanding through carefully planned or facilitated learning experiences and activities, tailored to their abilities
- Learning is reviewed during and at the end of the lesson to aid retention of new knowledge, skills and concepts
- Learning is put into context with other subjects/wider world/application
- Feedback is provided, both verbal and written which celebrates success against the learning objective and/or personal targets and which identifies next steps for improvement.

We offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways. These include:
- Independent, partner, group and whole class work
- Asking and answering questions that encourage recall, probe thinking and explanation, develop higher order thinking skills
- First hand experiences including visits and visitors to motivate and engage learner
- Investigation and problem solving activities
- Creative and expressive activities using a variety of media
- Through free-flow and independent exploration
- Designing and making activities
- Using the range of information technology available
- Physical activities.

Lesson Structure

Planning: Lesson plans contain information about the teaching sequence, activity, modelling, questions, tasks to be set, resources needed, assessments to be made and guidance for additional adults.

Lesson objectives are carefully planned from the EYFS and the new National Curriculum programmes of study. They are age related unless significant reasons for choosing a previous year groups objective are given (e.g. gaps in learning or crossover topics such as year 5/6 spelling lists). Objectives should not be taken from the next year group up rather children should have the opportunity to explore the given learning objective at greater depth.

Success criteria are generated as a sequence of steps children need to follow to achieve the learning objective. These steps are most effective when modelled well by the class teacher over the course of the learning sequence. Key questions can be generated prior to the teaching. Vocabulary lists are planned so that children are confident in using the correct language to help effective learning.

Effective teaching and learning occurs where teachers reflect on the lesson so that future teaching can be modified and improved.

Lessons will be well paced with time used effectively to maximise learning.

Teaching Strategies:
The aim of each lesson is to further/deepen the learning of all children. Strategies to assist this include:

Talk Partners:
A key element in teaching at TLAP is the use of talk partners. We recognise the importance of speaking and listening in all areas of the curriculum and the needs for all learners to articulate and therefore extend their learning. Talk partners should:
- Be organised and changed regularly
- Have good speaking and listening modelled
- Prior to be asked to 'Talk to your Partner', children will be provided with an opportunity for the individual think time

Talk-Partners promote interactive learning strategies so should be used frequently within main teaching, to increase participation, separate teacher talk and provide assessment opportunities by encouraging children to respond to questions.

Effective Questioning
Effective questioning means challenging children to deepen their thinking. Questions may be open/closed and based on Bloom's Taxonomy to provide depth. Teachers need to take time to plan effective questions which go beyond recall with strategies. Teachers use effective questioning to assess learners and adapt the lesson appropriately to meet the needs of learners:

To respond to questions, a number of interactive strategies should be adopted, including:
- Thumbs up, thumbs down to how agreement/understanding
- Mini-whiteboards/show me
- True/false sorting activities
- Cards/number fans
- Use of 'no hands up' (perhaps involving targeted questions or random selection after talk partners)

Alongside these there is enormous scope for using ICT resources to ensure children are engaged with their learning.

The information gained from these strategies should be used to determine a shift in lesson pathway immediately, or in subsequent lessons, for particular groups of children or all children, in order to challenge their potential and ensure learning time is maximised.

Modelling and Success Criteria:
A key aspect of the teaching should be the clear and specific task that the children are required to do. A recommended strategy is to use a good model to analyse and generate success criteria from. These success criteria are then a tool to guide children through their own piece of work. Assessment (self/peer/teacher) and plenaries are the opportunity to reflect on success and next steps, referring to the success criteria. Planning identifies success criteria (steps for learning success).

Group/Independent learning strategies
To continue to promote Curiosity, Exploration and Discovery, children should be given opportunities to work collaboratively, or to share their ideas with others, regularly.
There should be clear outcomes planned for collaborative learning to ensure time is used meaningfully to make the curriculum accessible for all learners.
Discovery Days and Museum Learning help to enhance collaborative learning.

Differentiation:
Staff know that all of the children in our school have diverse learning needs. Differentiation is therefore essential in matching learning opportunities with individual needs. Differentiation can occur in:

- The content delivered - teachers being clear about the knowledge, skills and attitudes they want groups or individuals to learn
- Scaffolds - tools that help structure the learning
- Teacher support – teacher to gage the level of independence required for the task
- Varying the learning environment in the classroom – using different groupings, levels of support, resources
- The learning process – varying learning activities or strategies to provide appropriate methods for pupils to explore the concepts
- The product – varying the complexity of the product (which means teachers setting clear expectations for the quality of the work expected, not just accepting a range of outcomes)
- Questioning – varying the range of questions to help guide children through the learning process

Staff must be aware that differentiation by outcome alone is not effective differentiation. As such, we must ensure that we offer all children access to an appropriate curriculum. In some instances it may mean an individual curriculum, although more often it means **personalising learning** by using some of the following strategies:

- Providing resources which are appropriate: careful selection and evaluation is required
- Planning for support of groups or individuals by additional adults or the teacher
- Being aware of groupings to support children
- Providing writing frames appropriate to the capabilities of the child
- Scaffolding support as appropriate to support the child
- Adapting activities as appropriate
- Providing word banks/pictures
- Adapting/renegotiating success criteria (this could be to further challenge high achievers)
- Utilising flexible groups
- Promoting independent choice
- Providing alternative methods of recording work eg ICT, MP3 recorders

It is key to recognise the link between effective formative assessment and effective differentiation: in order to differentiate effectively, teachers must have a clear understanding of exactly where the children are at.

Pupil Grouping
Teachers should plan opportunities for children to work collaboratively with others in a range of different groupings to enrich their learning experiences and opportunities. Grouping should be fluid and be relevant for pupils, according to their next learning steps. Teachers should keep the following criteria for groupings in mind when planning and ensure groupings are appropriate to the activity:

- Mixed ability or similar ability groups
- Gender ratio
- Children's home languages
- Children's social behaviour
- Individual leadership qualities

Good and Outstanding teaching must include:

- Clear learning objectives made explicit to the pupils with precise success criteria
- A wow moment/purpose to engage the children
- Learning put into a wider context – why are we learning this?
- Models of good work shared
- A range of question types
- Range of interactive strategies – not dominated by teacher talk (teacher talk should be limited to 5 minute chunks)
- Effective use of additional adults to meet pupil needs (and challenge learners)
- Clear, appropriate differentiation
- Activities which are differentiated to match the learning intention and fully engage the children
- Stimulating resources which support independent learning and are tailored to meet the needs of individual pupils.
- Children are asked to share their thinking
- Success criteria referred to during lesson and in plenary
- Self or peer assessment related to success criteria
- Time for children to improve their work in lessons (including responding to marking)

Teachers ensure that they create a classroom climate conducive to effective learning based on good working relationships with all the children in their charge.

Assessment

Teachers know each individual's abilities and make ongoing assessments of each child's progress which informs planning for lessons. It enables them to take into account each child's starting point when planning for the further development and deepening of knowledge, skills and conceptual understanding. Through differentiation, teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for children with disabilities additional needs.

Effective assessment can be carried out in a number of ways. Best practice is to look at the whole picture to establish how each child is doing in regards to their academic progress.
A range of assessment strategies include:

- Teacher assessment
- Termly assessments
- Marking and feedback
- Questioning
- Assessment for Learning
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At PPPA we are striving for every child to at least meet expected age related expectations in Reading, Writing and Maths. We monitor each child's progress towards this target on a half-termly basis. Staff also continuously monitor pupil's well-being and involvement.

Pupils not making expected progress will be identified at the earliest stage and appropriate intervention and support implemented to close any gaps in achievement as rapidly as possible. LSAs are used to support all pupils, therefore they are aware of pupils' abilities. When working with a child (group of children) they record and observe pupil contributions, methods (etc) and report this to the Class Teacher.

Attitudes to Learning:

At PPPA we strive to create a caring, supportive learning environment in which all children are treated fairly and with respect. All teachers follow school policy in relation to behaviour, to help establish positive Attitudes to Learning.

Children are praised for their efforts to help to build positive attitudes to school and learning. We expect good order and behaviour at all times following guidelines and sanctions outlined in the Behaviour Policy.

Every opportunity is used to promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development reflecting and actively promoting British Values.

Home-Learning tasks are used to provide parents with opportunities to extend children's wider learning experiences (primarily through extended projects).

Learning Environment:

Our classrooms and corridors are attractive learning environments. Displays are changed regularly to reflect topics studied by the children. Displays in the hall reflect a whole school theme (Autumn Art/Religious buildings), whilst classroom display space is used to scaffold learning. All classrooms have 'Working Walls' displaying key features of e.g. English (Story Maps and new vocabulary), Mathematics, topic work to support children's independent learning: Therefore, displays are used as learning prompts for the children.

We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning and that an exciting, well-organised classroom promotes independent use of resources supporting effective learning.

Professional Development:

As a school, we give high priority to, and actively support teachers' on-going professional development to ensure teaching of the highest quality which results in highly effective learning and progress for pupils. Additionally, all teachers regularly reflect on their practice identifying strengths and areas for further development: Coaching, professional development meetings, Learning Walks and Line management meetings aid this.

The Role of Parents

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We do all that we can to inform parents about what and how their children are learning:

- By holding induction meetings on entry to Nursery and Reception and 'Meet the Teacher Meetings' in July or September
- Parents can access curriculum information about topics to be studied online
- Parents' workshops are held to explain our school strategies e.g. for phonics, assessment, EYFS
- Parents also receive termly pupil reports
- Parents are also kept informed through school newsletters
- Parents are invited to Parent-Teacher consultations

To ensure that children have the best chance of need parents to support children by:

- Supporting the school in implementing school policies
- Ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible

- Inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour

Monitoring and Review
Teachers have the professional responsibility to ensure their teaching meets the "teacher standards".

The Headteacher, SLT (and as appointed, subject leaders) will monitor, evaluate and review Teaching & Learning to ensure that this high standard is met.

Members of The Langley Academy Trust and Parlaunt Park Primary Academy's Governing Body will also undertake impact visits to assess and monitor Teaching and Learning.

This policy will be reviewed in January 2018, or as necessary.

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