



## Teaching and Learning Policy at Windmill Primary School

### 1. Rationale

We acknowledge that children learn in different ways and at different paces through a variety of experiences; we therefore recognise the need to develop effectively and adaptive strategies that allow all our children to learn in ways that best suit them. All children have different starting points, different experiences and different responses to teaching and learning.

Our first principle at Windmill Primary School is '**quality first teaching**': this means that the class teacher has a responsibility to ensure that all members of the class, irrespective of needs, feel included, challenged, successful and that they can access work at the right level. Teachers in consultation with phase leads and Inclusion staff will consider groupings; plan work in different ways and at different levels.

Following this, our shared approach to teaching and learning is shaped by 6 key principles:

- 1. Teaching is all about the children**
- 2. Each child is unique**
- 3. Children need to be supported and encouraged to become lifelong learners**
- 4. All children can succeed**
- 5. Learning should be engaging and with a real-life context**
- 6. Teachers should see themselves as learners too and always strive to reflect and develop their own practice through professional learning and collaboration.**

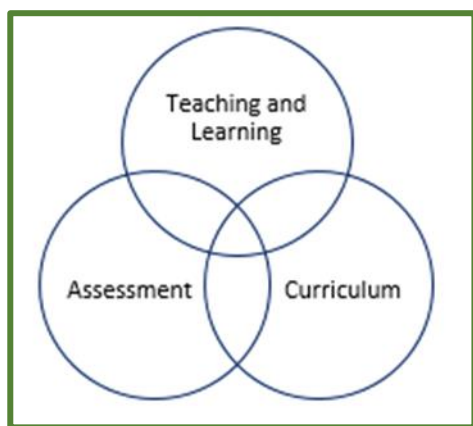
### 2. Aim

The aim of this policy is to provide a clear statement of the principle and practice of teaching and learning at Windmill Primary School. This statement represents our agreed view of how children learn and how we intend to encourage and support that learning. It provides a framework which enables teachers and support staff to be confident, developing their own practice, and ensure that they are consistent in the way we work with our pupils.

#### **We aim to facilitate learning to enable our children to:**

- Enjoy their learning through experiencing success and by increasing their self esteem
- Become independent, confident learners who take greater responsibility for their own learning
- Become resilient, reflective, resourceful and reciprocal learners
- Feel secure and comfortable in school
- Acquire the necessary skills for learning, now and in the future, by developing lively, enquiring minds with the ability to question, share ideas and work co-operatively
- Recognise and develop their own personal skills to the best of their ability
- Access a rich, balanced and relevant curriculum in a variety of ways. This includes encouraging creativity, promoting diversity and encouraging self-expression
- Use language and number effectively as a foundation for learning and to feel confident in all areas of the curriculum
- Develop an understanding of societal values, and the significance of other beliefs, cultures and ways of life.

### 3. Core elements of our lessons at Windmill Primary



Great teaching and learning does not happen in a vacuum. At Windmill we stress the importance of planning our teaching and learning within the context of an ambitious and dynamic curriculum across the longer term; this planning is constantly reviewed, informed and nuanced by the outcomes of teacher assessment – both formative and summative.

The long-term plans map out the curriculum coverage across a term, year and key stage however the medium and short term planning must reflect and show evidence of adaptation and adjustment that addresses key learning skills and knowledge for the specific cohort as well as individual learners.

**We believe that teaching is most effective when combining the following four elements during a teaching session:**

**a) Engaging in the concepts in the early stages of a lesson** or sequence of lessons - through warm up activities with the emphasis on curiosity and enjoyment so that the children are keen to participate in the learning objectives. This includes our Windmill Wow days at the start of each term but also on a day to day basis. This may include some pre-teaching for vulnerable pupils, to help them access new learning effectively;

**b) Modelling effectively and incorporating challenge for learning;** enabling children to feel confident in attempting tasks and a choice in how and at what level they learn (see NET Teaching and Learning Wheel); questioning should be targeted and probing adopting a “no hands” approach and extended, explained responses encouraged to challenge and deepen thinking

**c) Differentiating tasks and activities for all learners;** allowing children to develop their understanding either individually or collaboratively, this may include varying resources, tasks or groupings of pupils and the deployment of additional adults

**d) Reviewing learning actively at appropriate key points of the session** – either as a class, group or at the individual level. Pupils celebrating and sharing achievement, effort and success and looking forward to the next step either orally or in written form.

**Throughout all these stages excellent teaching can be characterised by:**

- Setting challenging but achievable expectations, clear explanations and rigorous pace, that may vary according to the relative needs of pupils / sub groups
- Utilising varied and flexible teaching styles, dependent on the task and the individual needs of the learner
- Showing secure subject knowledge of the areas being taught
- Having an exciting, enthusiastic approach to learning which will help inspire, motivate and engage children
- Giving clear focus through explicit learning intentions and success criteria which identify what learners' need to understand and be able to do in order to achieve success
- Using assistant teachers effectively in a planned and targeted manner, as advised by the SENDCo, and resourcing to support the children's learning
- Deploying positive behaviour management strategies to motivate and encourage pupils to respond appropriately and help create a focused climate for learning
- Creating opportunities for self-evaluation and reflection, built in throughout the session

- Using a consistent teaching and feedback approach in-line with whole school policies and procedures (see Assessment and Feedback policy)
- Ensuring every child makes progress in their learning, regardless of ability – and that they can see this for themselves
- Creating a supportive and purposeful learning environment
- Linking learning to pupils' prior skills, knowledge and understanding, extending the learning where appropriate
- Using a range of question types e.g. open questions and closed questions with pupils encouraged to generate their own questions to investigate
- Presenting information in short chunks, which enables children to maintain their interest and focus
- Ensuring good interaction and communication between children as well as adults and children, ensuring that the most vulnerable children are supported by the specialist teacher
- Valuing the creative ideas of children and actively encourage their input.

#### **4. Progress**

Rapid progress in learning is central to our ethos. All pupils are expected to make at least good progress. Pupil Progress meetings are held half-termly when class teachers meet with Senior Leaders to ensure that every child is making rapid and sustained progress; that interventions or adaptations are being made to support pupils who are at risk of not making progress, and that these are having impact. These meetings also consider the progress of high prior attaining pupils to ensure that their pace of learning and progress continues to exceeding expectations.

Targets and next steps for learning are regularly shared with pupils and parents.

#### **5. The Learning Environment**

At Windmill Primary, we believe that our learning environment sets the climate for learning and enables all children to access the curriculum.

##### **Classrooms and communal areas therefore should:**

- be welcoming, inviting and interesting
- provide for a balance of between whole school consistency and individuality
- be rich in literary print and number
- celebrate learning, promoting inclusion, diversity and aspiration
- reflect our values, our community and our drivers of work-world-wellbeing
- be age appropriate
- encourage independence and experimentation
- support collaboration and independent learning
- be safe and secure

#### **6. IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS**

In order to facilitate excellent learning, teachers will:

- have consistent high expectations of every pupil, irrespective of ability, gender, ethnicity, age or prior achievement
- have an extensive understanding of the primary curriculum- the skills, concepts, knowledge and attitudes which are the goals of the learning process
- use a suitable range of organisational strategies and teaching methods to establish a positive learning environment
- maintain good conduct and positive behaviours for learning
- have clear learning intentions which are shared with and understood by the children (learning/success criteria)

- use a range of organisational strategies and teaching methods to suit different learning styles e.g. visual, auditory and kinaesthetic (VAK)
- organise human and physical resources effectively
- plan challenging, engaging activities that support our ethos of “enjoy – achieve – aspire”
- show awareness of the needs of specific groups within the class
- assess, evaluate and reflect upon the impact of their teaching and adjust as required.

## 7. Responsibility

All staff are responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented and acted on. When evaluating the use and impact of this policy, school leaders will evaluate the extent to which there is evidence of:

- the impact of teaching on academic attainment and progress;
- the impact of teaching on pupil engagement and passion for learning, capacity for independent and critical thinking, self-awareness and resilience and self-confidence.

## Evaluating the Quality of Teaching

Every teacher is expected to evaluate the impact of their teaching in order to continue improving as a reflective professional. We support the view that the very best teachers constantly seek improvement and want to continually develop their skill as expert teachers.

Knowing about the whole school quality and effectiveness of teaching is a core responsibility for phase and senior leaders. Ultimately, this responsibility rests with the Principal. The evaluation of teaching is undertaken through the involvement of a range of leaders and teachers. In evaluating, the following questions are asked:

- **How effective is teaching? How do we know?**
- **What impact is teaching having on learning and progress? What is our evidence?**
- **What do we need to do next to improve further?**

Any evaluation of teaching takes account of the impact of 'teaching over time', utilising a best fit approach which draws on a range of evidence, e.g. work scrutiny, lesson observation, analysis of data, feedback from pupils, etc.