



Principles of Teaching

At Windmill, we don't believe that a lengthy and detailed Teaching & Learning policy makes us all better teachers. We have agreed instead to always focus on the following Principles of Teaching and use these in our everyday practice to ensure we offer the best possible learning environment for our children.

1) **It's all about the children.**

This may be a very simple and possibly obvious statement but we make sure it is at the heart of everything we do.

2) **Every child is unique.**

This means we have to be adaptable. Children learn at different rates, learn differently in different subjects and have good and bad days just like the rest of us. We will not expect children to fit in with our plan. Instead, we will do our best to adapt to the needs of each child, ensuring every child has the opportunity to learn and progress. If a child is struggling to learn a concept, then we find another way to teach it.

3) **Children need to be life-long learners.**

We have a responsibility to show our children what it means to be a good learner. We use our metacognition learning behaviours to help with this. If a child develops a passion for learning and a thirst for knowledge, then he or she will continue to learn and develop. We strive to make the context of learning as engaging as possible so that children want to learn. Our curriculum is also skills based – we teach the skills of subjects so that children can apply them to new contexts.

4) **All children can succeed.**

Children are individuals; this means some children learn at different rates in different subjects at different times in their education. To ensure all children understand key concepts we spend greater time going into depth about a subject as opposed to racing through the things that all children should know. This could lead to some children having large gaps in subject knowledge because they learnt too quickly. By taking learning at a steadier and deeper pace, we can secure progress and keep expectations high for every child. We can also provide deeper and richer learning for children who are above the national expectation for their age, giving them opportunities to apply their knowledge and deepen their understanding. One way to develop their depth of understanding and show mastery of a concept is for children to talk about their learning and explain their reasoning in groups of their peers. At Windmill, children will spend time becoming masters of learning by applying their knowledge in a range of ways.

5) **Learning should be engaging and with a real life context.**

If learning is memorable, children will find it easier to refer back to it at a later date. We work hard to make our environment, our teaching and learning opportunities engaging so children want to learn. We also focus on real-life contexts to give learning a purpose.

6) **We need to be learners too.**

We believe that it is important for children to see that the adults at Windmill as learners too. This means we share new learning with the children and also ensure that we discuss and develop our own skills as teachers.

These Principles of Teaching are discussed as a staff and referred to regularly to make sure that Teaching & Learning at Windmill allows every child to reach their full potential.

Reviewed March 2018

