Teaching and Learning Policy

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Introduction

Teaching at Castle Primary School is 'Learning Centred', meaning that each element of whole school and classroom practice is designed with an understanding of how children learn best at its heart. Through our teaching, we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives. This policy sets out the expectations for all lessons regardless of the subject. For specific guidelines for individual subject please see separate documents entitled 'subject guidelines'.

Aims

This policy guides what teachers and support staff do, how time is managed, the organisation of the classroom and what our school does to create an effective learning environment.

- To ensure high quality teaching that enables the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding which will be of use to all future learning
- To promote, facilitate and enable the inclusion of children with disabilities and special educational needs
- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum which provides opportunity for all pupils to acquire content through variation and differentiation.
- To promote a wide range of enrichment experiences which enable children to make connections between all forms of learning.
- To develop lively and enquiring minds through encouraging children to question and discuss issues, in order to make informed decisions
- To promote positive attitudes, good behaviour and moral understanding.
- To nurture self-esteem so children are motivated to learn and to develop an ability to co-operate and work with others

At Castle Primary School we believe that children learn best when:

- learning activities are well planned, ensuring progress in the short, medium and long term and that learning activities are part of a learning journey that moves from components to composites.
- teaching and learning activities enthuse, engage and motivate children to learn, and foster their curiosity and enthusiasm for learning
- assessment informs teaching so that there is provision for support, repetition and extension of learning for each child, at each level of attainment
- the learning environment is ordered, the atmosphere is purposeful and children feel safe
- there are strong links between home and school, and the importance of parental involvement in their children's learning is recognised, valued and developed
- they are supported and allowed to make links between different subjects
- their interests are valued and nurtured as a starting point for future lessons

Through our teaching we aim to:

- enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners;

- foster children's self-esteem, and help them to build positive relationships with other people;
- develop children's self-respect, encourage them to understand the ideas, attitudes and values of others, and teach them to respect other people's feelings;
- show respect for a diverse range of cultures and, in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people;
- enable children to understand their community, and help them feel valued as part of it;
- help children grow into reliable, independent and positive global citizens.

School Expectations

We expect all pupils and staff to follow our school values:

- Inspiration
- Friendship
- Courage
- Excellence
- Respect
- Equality
- Determination

This is achieved by:

- Staff having high expectations of themselves and all pupils
- Teachers imparting knowledge accurately and with enthusiasm which generates high levels of commitment from pupils.
- Pupils making sustained progress over time.
- Teachers systematically checking understanding, intervening when needed.
- Pupils being challenged and, where appropriate, individual needs being met.
- Teachers providing high quality marking and constructive feedback to pupils that assists in next steps.
- Pupils responding to their marking.

Teaching

As a school we expect:

- Staff to have secure subject knowledge and understanding (when support is needed teachers can seek advice from Senior Leaders or subject coordinators).
- Staff to plan appropriately for all groups of children and access high quality resources
- That every lesson has a clear learning objective which is explained to the class and is visible on the children’s work.
- That all lessons demonstrate key elements of good ‘Assessment for Learning’ (AFL) practice
- That activities are varied and adapted to ensure that children explore, develop and
- practise new skills/ concepts
- That staff cater for a range of differing learning styles and cultural diversity thus

- ensuring pupil participation and understanding
- Staff to provide appropriate resources, which support learning outcomes and provide
- challenge for the more able
- That staff have high expectations of presentation, quality and quantity of work
- Teaching Assistants to be fully involved and active in all parts of lessons

Subject Learning journeys

Each subject across the curriculum will have a 'learning journey'. This may be evident in books, through planning or displays. Each learning journey will have a clear starting point, teach the children specific skills and finish with an end product. End products may comprise of a final piece of writing, a finished product or performance. For subject specific learning journeys please see the appendix.

Curriculum

Our curriculum is broad and balanced focusing on depth of learning and mastery of Skills and knowledge. This enables teachers to remain with the subject/topic for longer ensuring pupils have mastered the content before accelerating into new material. We use a range of resources to support our curriculum:

- The Primary National Curriculum 2014;
- The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework ;
- The Hampshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education;

Long Term Planning

Our 'Whole School Curriculum Map plots the content covered from Year R to Year six for each individual year group and each curriculum area.
This is broken down carefully and opportunities to promote mastery are available throughout.

It enables us to ensure balance and progression across the school and to identify cross curricular links and opportunities for educational visits.

Within our foundation stage the planning is based on developing skills and knowledge throughout various child-led topics.

Medium Term Planning

For English and Mathematics we use the planning provided by the National Curriculum Programme of Study for each subject, although we alter sections in order to meet the needs of our own children.

For Mathematics we also use the National Curriculum alongside the White Rose scheme.

A long- term plan has been drawn up by staff to cover each subject. This plan works alongside the Primary National Curriculum to provide a full coverage of subjects and has been planned to facilitate a creative curriculum.

Medium term plans are produced by the staff teaching in each year group with advice from subject leaders and the curriculum leader. They show which topics will be taught, when and how.

Short term plans are produced by class teachers to enable them to deliver what is in the medium term plan. Short term plans will include adaptation, showing how the less able children will be developed and how the more able will be challenged. Short term planning will include consideration of how other adults in the room are to be utilised.

Different resources, learning objectives, levels of support or expected outcomes are means of providing differentiation, as are enabling questions, individual target setting and giving prior knowledge or help about topics to be covered.

Quality of Learning

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to develop strategies that allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them. The psychologist Howard Gardner identifies seven main areas of intelligence: linguistic, logical/mathematical, visual/spatial, kinaesthetic, musical, interpersonal/group working, and intrapersonal/reflective. We take into account these different forms of intelligence when planning teaching and learning styles.

We offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways. These include:

- Investigation and problem solving
- Research and finding out
- Group work
- Pair work
- Independent work
- Whole class work
- Asking and answering questions
- Use of the computer
- Fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest
- Creative activities
- Watching television and responding to musical or tape-recorded material
- Debates, role plays and oral presentations
- Designing and making things
- Participation in athletic or physical activity
- Digital media

Assessment for learning

Assessment is not a singular activity; it is both about the measurement of performance at a given point in time and the ongoing process of Assessment For Learning (AFL). At Castle Primary School we ensure that any assessments which are carried out are purposeful and used to inform future teaching and learning. These assessments are against National Curriculum objectives to ascertain whether children are working at age related expectation.

We track all pupil performance and in particular identify those pupils at risk of underachievement. Additionally we also ensure that those children who have been identified as working beyond or at greater depth than the year group expectations are provided with appropriate levels of challenge and have increased opportunities to succeed.

We use the Hampshire Assessment Model and DC Pro to gauge whether children are working above or below age related expectations. Our system calculates progress based on age-related expectation points over time, prior expectations and the depth of a child's learning to show simply and easily who is making the right amount of progress through the depth-orientated National Curriculum. We formally input data three times a year (End of the autumn, spring and summer term).
In years 3 to 5 children are assessed through the NFER tests for reading and spelling. These results are then used to address misconceptions and inform future teaching.

All teaching will be structured to maximise learning opportunities and activities will be planned in accordance with the following principles:

- the teaching should build on previous learning and be instigated/designed by the learner;
- it should give pupils the 'big idea' and purpose of the project;
- the teacher should explain the success criteria, and why the activity is important;
- the lesson should be presented in a range of styles;
- it should allow opportunities for the pupils to build up their own understanding through various activities;
- develop core skills in English, Maths and ICT through a variety of opportunities;
- it should allow opportunities for the children to review and reflect on what has been learnt at regular intervals throughout the lesson;
- it should have built-in opportunities for feedback to the children, celebrating success and reviewing learning strategies;
- the teaching should make success criteria explicit and indicate what the next step in the learning will be.

Classroom Environment

Our classrooms are attractive learning environments. We change displays regularly, to ensure that the classroom reflects the topics studied by the children. We ensure that the children have the opportunity to display their best work at some time during the year. All classrooms have a range of dictionaries and fiction and non-fiction books, as well as working walls relating to the current learning in English and Maths. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and an exciting classroom promotes the independent use of resources and high-quality work from the children.

We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all.

The Role of Parents

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

- Holding parent information evenings and new entrant meetings for Year R, to explain our school strategies for teaching English, Maths and health education
- Holding individual parents' evenings, twice a year, to discuss their child's current academic progress

- Sending information to parents in the form of a curriculum newsletter at the start of each term in which we outline the concepts/topics that the children will be studying during that term at school
- Sending an annual report to parents in which we explain the progress of each child and indicate how the child can improve further
- Explaining to parents how they can support children with their homework. We suggest, for example, regular shared reading with very young children, and support for older children with their topics and investigative work.

We believe that parents have a responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We would like parents to:

- Ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible
- Ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and P.E. kit
- Do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school
- Inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school
- Promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general

The Role of Governors

Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school policies on teaching and learning. In particular they:

- Support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively
- Ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning
- Monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations
- Monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment
- Ensure staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching
- Monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policy through the school self-review processes. These include reports from the subject leaders, the SENCO and the headteacher's report to governors as well as a review of the in-service training sessions attended by our staff.

Review

We are aware of the need to review the schools teaching and learning policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in curriculum, developments in technology or changes in the physical environment of the school

Appendix 1

Subject Learning Journeys

Art

- Introduce the artist/designer/craft maker: stick a photo in sketchbooks learn 5 facts about the artist
- Study their work: stick photos in sketchbooks include notes reflecting their thoughts write about the elements focused on (e.g. line/tone/form)
- Experiment: drawing style / colours / composition teach explicit skills at this point and the next, (chalk blending, colour paint mixing, how to hold a pencil when sketching, etc)
- Practice: use sketchbooks to practice with the chosen medium(s)
- Create: produce a piece of work using the skills taught
- Reflect and evaluate: make notes on their work highlight 'I can' statements to self-assess

Computing

- Start by exploring and decomposing a project, app, game or system into components that can be learned individually.
- Practice these component skills individually in the context of a final project they are working towards.
- Debug their learning throughout the journey finding ways to troubleshoot when things are unsuccessful.
- Culminate in a final project where the children can apply their new skills to achieve a specific outcome.

DT

- Exploration of a product with annotations about choice of materials and or mechanisms.
- Exploration of materials or mechanisms.
- Planning and designing
- Making
- Evaluation

English

- Stimulate and generate – in this part of the journey children will be given a hook (a piece of text) to generate excitement and interest. There will also be development of spoken language to generate a deeper understanding, word level work including the development of text or subject specific vocab and shared reading of the text driver. Teacher's will ensure each child has the required 'background knowledge' to complete the end piece of writing.
- Capture, sift and sort – children will observe the author's craft and use this to capture ideas and literary techniques, identify the author's style and voice and begin to plan by sorting their ideas into careful sequences using a variety of planning structures. During this part of the journey children will also explore the grammatical techniques and high-quality examples of the genre. They will then combine all of these things within their apprentice write which will allow them to 'have a go' at writing in the same style as the author.

- Create, refine and evaluate – this is the final part of the writing journey where children will apply all of the skills taught to create a sustained piece of writing. This stage will give the children the opportunity to follow their plan. Once they have completed their piece of writing, the children will then refine their draft through proof reading and editing. Each completed journey will then finish with an evaluation which will involve the children reflecting against an agreed success criteria.

Geography

The learning journey has 5 steps:

- Hook - each Geography unit will start with a hook. This will give the children the opportunity to think, recognise, make connections and raise their own questions. From this hook children will then be inspired, curious and fascinated about their geography unit of work.
- Questions – A question to investigate will ensure that children remain curious and fascinated throughout the unit, it will allow them to find out something new and to make sense of it.
- Investigate places and content using geographical skills – children will be taught and use skills to develop and deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- Connection, comparison and patter making – children will have the opportunity to make links between new and existing knowledge.
- Conclusion – Children will evaluate what they have learnt and how they have developed their geographical skills.

History

The learning journey for History has six steps;

- Hook – Each enquiry will start with a hook to engage the children in their new learning. This could be by a mystery object, looking at an artefact or picture or a visit.
- Collecting information in interesting and varied ways – this could be by looking at a variety of sources such as pictures, artefacts, interviews and visits
- Making sense of ideas and processing the information – children will have the opportunity to sequence events and ideas as well as sort, group and reject historical sources of information
- Drawing own conclusions and making meaning – recognising the significant events within the time period, demonstrate understanding and linking ideas together
- Checking and refining understanding – by testing ideas and introducing new ideas, materials or perspectives.
- End product- children will have an opportunity to demonstrate their understanding in an imaginative way such as; becoming a museum curator, creating a tourist brochure, making a movie or creating a page for a non - fiction book.

Maths

- The learning is broken down into blocks, recommended by the White Rose Hub, in order to form a learning journey made up of steps leading to a BIG problem.

- Each step is modelled, scaffolded and practiced using an I DO, WE DO, YOU DO approach so that children are able to access the learning at their appropriate starting point.
- Throughout each learning journey, starters are used to recall and consolidate children's knowledge from previous journeys.
- Every learning journey has opportunities for reasoning using mathematical vocabulary; there is challenge for all learners so that knowledge and skills can be deepened.
- The composite outcome of the BIG problem allows children to apply their substantive and disciplinary knowledge in context.

Modern Foreign Language (French)

- The learning journey in MFL begins with the acquisition of new vocabulary around a theme - this may be nouns (animals, classroom resources) or verbs (actions and activities).
- A central question is also introduced which then enables children to use their new vocabulary within conversational French - asking a question and being able to answer it.
- As the children progress through the school, the written aspects of these journeys become more central.
- These journeys allow children to develop their communication skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing, as well as their appreciation of French culture.

Music

- We use the 'Sing Up!' commercial scheme. We encourage our children on their musical journeys by giving them opportunities to connect with others through singing, listening, composing, playing and evaluating.
- Introduction/rehearsal of the inter-related dimensions: pitch, duration, tempo, timbre, texture, structure are key ingredients of each journey.
- At the end of each journey, we aim to build the enthusiasm and confidence for the children to share their musical skill in performance whether in class or to a wider audience

PE

- We use the Primary PE Planning commercial scheme. In PE, pupils embrace rich and varied activities with enthusiasm and passion. PE lessons are designed to be fun and progressive for children of all abilities. Our learning journeys link together to ensure physical literacy is being developed over a variety of areas of Physical Education, including: invasion games, track and field, outdoor adventurous activities, fielding and striking, dance and gymnastics as well as swimming. Within these learning journeys:
- Children begin with a dynamic warmup to prepare their bodies and muscles for physical activity.
- Followed by a series of short drills and activities, which prepare the children physically and cognitively to be successful when competing or performing. Finally, children then apply these skills against or to each other within competitive games or performances.

PSHE

- We use the One Decision learning and resource platform to support our teacher of PHSE. This contains a variety of videos and worksheets which aid discussion about topics covered within the National Curriculum.

RE (taken directly from The Living Difference Syllabus)

- The learning journey in RE has five key steps that the children will work through:
    - Communication and Apply - to attend to their own and others' experience
    - Enquire and Contextualise - to engage intellectually
    - Evaluation - to discern value for others and themselves in a way dependent on the context of the enquiry.

- Each enquiry begins with the teacher inviting the children into the enquiry process, usually at the Communicate but sometimes at the Enquire step. If beginning at the Communicate step the teacher will bring the child or young person to attend first to their own experience of the concept through an activity, before exploring their own responses in relation to others' experience.
- At Contextualise, children examine the concept in specific context, for example, through investigating the activities of a local religious community, Christian, Muslim, Sikh, etc. A non-religious context may be used if it enhances the enquiry. An effective Contextualise step allows children's enquiry to deepen intellectually with increasing openness to the plurality of ways it is possible to be religious. The context may be, for example, a bible story (primary), a case study, news article, artefact, visit, visitor, video or dramatic scenario, but always a real situation which raises issues and invites questions. Children will be able to appreciate further viewpoints and see how people's lives are changed by their experience of the concept
- At Apply, children become even more aware of others' responses and might give examples from their own experience of the concept in different situations. The enquiry has now moved on because children have come to see challenges and complexities existing in the range of experiences and different situations. However, the enquiry is in general still working with ideas familiar to those in the class.
- At Enquire, material that is new to the children is introduced in varying complexity, usually depending on the age of the children. At Enquire, children may also reflect collaboratively, for example in a community of philosophical enquiry, becoming more intellectually humble or self-effacing, recognising that there are many different ways of looking at things.
- At the Evaluate step children are given the opportunity to weigh up their experience of the concept in two ways. First from the viewpoint of someone living a religious (or non-religious) life, as in the context studied. This is what is meant by Evaluate within. For example, in Key Stage 3 the teacher may open a discussion about why jihad is important for Muslims or why the Eucharist is important for Christians; anticipating an engagement with a range of Muslim and Christian views and forms of expression. Secondly, the children and young people will be enabled to discern what may be of value in the religious (or non-religious) experience of the concept for them, from their own

point of view. This is what is meant by Evaluate without. This should involve collaboration and dialogue.

Science

- Science Learning journeys have an overarching 'Big Question' for each science unit studied. Within each unit, the substantive knowledge is broken into knowledge blocks which follow one of three topic type- building block, multiple context or big model topic:
    - The building block topic: ideas build upon each other sequentially making an increasingly sophisticated model.
    - The big model topic: an important model is shared at the beginning, but detail and complexity are added through the topic.
    - The multiple context topic: an important overarching concept or idea is taught at the beginning and then applied in a number of different contexts.
- Within each learning journey, purposeful problem-solving activities are planned in at key points that link to specific working scientifically skills.