



Ormskirk Church of England Primary School

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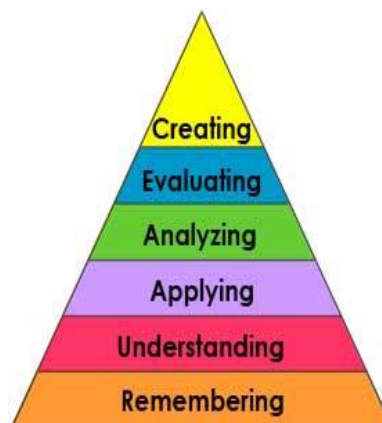
TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT POLICY

Updated September 2016

The 'Learning Process' and 'Language of Learning' at Ormskirk C.E. Primary School

At Ormskirk C. E. Primary we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the idea that both adults and children learn new things every day. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone; for a significant part of the time it should be fun and even inspiring. In turn we believe this fosters intrinsic motivation and creates a happy and productive 'buzz' around school.

We like to learn *with* the children through the curriculum rather than to teach rigidly to a fixed curriculum. We want to explore and question concepts, values, knowledge and skills. Our curriculum has a focus on thinking skills and a recognition that every child must be known and understood extremely well by staff as individuals if we are going to help them to reach their full potential. Bloom's Taxonomy of Thinking Skills is now being used by the school as a basis for the assessment of the Foundation Subjects (all but English, Maths and R.E.). Bloom's Taxonomy teases out what the common features are for deeper learning; the first step in learning is being able to remember, the second is to understand, the third is applying & analysing, the fourth evaluating and the ultimate challenge in learning is creating. This model is shown represented in the triangle below.



The recording of children's success and special moments when learning will increasingly be recorded digitally on our Earwig System, and we are planning to surround each example of learning in the matching colour to the Taxonomy Triangle above. This will help parents see how deeply their children are learning a topic / concept and will also assist subject leaders in school track how well teaching, assessment and learning is progressing through school. It must be appreciated that when a topic captures the imagination of a child they may well achieve far higher levels of learning than in topics when they are less motivated. The introduction to topics within a foundation subject will be age related so a child in Year 4 may

produce an example of Evaluating and then in Year 6 produce examples of learning which do not reach the evaluating stage if they are finding the increased challenge of the work very hard. For foundation subjects we want to move away from thinking of year on year progression of levels and instead have a deeper look at which aspects of learning and specific topics have stretched and deepened each child's learning journey at school. We provide an interesting and broad curriculum, but we also strive for a depth in learning through how lessons are taught.

New assessment systems for Maths and English are being trialled throughout the school year. The systems we are exploring (KLIPS and ARMA) are to help keep the loop of assessment for learning tight and closely linked to furthering classroom teaching and learning. We have embraced the new curriculum and whilst you can see how we have mapped out our new curriculum in terms of coverage it is in the excitement and discussions with the children that a true flavour of the way we introduce and deliver our curriculum will be understood. We have many able children in school and it would be tempting to move these children on to being taught the next year's curriculum early, especially in Maths. However, research and plenty of anecdotal evidence shows that when this occurs too rapidly, and especially for young children, this then leads to issues later on. Instead we are very keen for the most able children to be challenged through creativity and broadening their application of skills and knowledge with the curriculum which is applicable to their age. This could be through problem solving in Maths, research and robustness of further and varied tests in Science, increasingly challenging novels in reading and engaging real and adult audiences in writing.

We plan out lessons with clear learning objectives as manifest in the English and Mathematics Curriculum (2014). Religious Education (R.E.) is taught discretely.

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 also try and model and install a strong work ethic through school. Knowing each child as an individual means that we have a better chance at addressing any difficulties they are struggling with and we can challenge those who otherwise may 'cruise'. From 2016 we are further developing opportunities for intervention, some very formal and intensive, other interventions more analytical. Whatever the intervention it is always chosen to match the child's needs and its impact is reviewed every term.

We deploy learning assistants and other adult helpers effectively. Sometimes they work with individual children and sometimes they work with small groups. Our adult helpers also assist with the preparation and storage of classroom equipment. Adult helpers are subject to D.B.S. (previously C.R.B.) clearance. They are prepared for working with children by an induction process which we are starting this Autumn 2016.

We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability and differentiate accordingly. When planning work for children with special educational needs and (S.E.N.D.) we give due regard to information and targets contained in the children's S.E.N.D. Plans. S.E.N.D. objectives and targets are focused on special needs which may include speech and language, empathy skills, concentration span, memory (e.g. automisation and metacognition); even if a child has Specific Learning Difficulties (dyslexia) we try and address the underlying challenges to the learning process for these children and not simply English and Maths targets. We have high expectations of all children, and we believe that their work here at Ormskirk C.E. Primary School is of the highest possible standard.

Our classrooms are attractive learning environments. We change displays regularly to ensure the classroom reflects the topics studied by the children. We ensure that all children have the opportunity to display their best work at some time during the year. We believe that the whole of our school provides a stimulating environment setting the climate for learning.

Professional development for all staff is seen as central to the growth of the school and appropriate training of staff, we believe, can directly affect teaching and in turn standards of learning.

Pupil Entitlement, Christian and British Values Permeating through the Delivery of the Curriculum

From 2016, we will consider how Lancashire's Pupil Entitlement can enrich our curriculum. Giving the children this Pupil Entitlement helps with motivation, aspiration and curiosity and other essential ingredients for an outstanding primary school experience. The entitlement is shown within the table which is in the appendix to this policy. The key headings are:

- Be Curious
- Be Knowledgeable
- Be Adventurous
- Be Ambitious
- Be Creative
- Be Collaborative
- Be Reflective
- Be Positive

Teachers consider pupil entitlement at the planning and organisation stage in curriculum delivery. Opportunities for experts to meet the children, visits, presentations etc. are all looked for and help enrich children's life skills and experiences.

Finally, through the day to day interactions with children, the staff try to demonstrate and develop the following Christian Values. These values underpin the school ethos.

Wisdom Compassion Humility Friendship Peace Trust Forgiveness Hope

Regarding British values, see our Anti-Bullying and British Values Policy.

We want our pupils to develop their independence and resilience, but never lose the sense of society and identity. With rights we believe strongly that there are also responsibilities. One such responsibility we feel our children achieve is to work hard. A strong work ethic prevails in school and this is largely why our range of interventions before and after school are so successful.

Effective Integration of Assessment within Teaching

When teaching, we focus on motivating the children and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. The starting point for our planning is the National Curriculum. However, as teachers we do not feel restrained by the curriculum and each teacher draws upon a range of resources to ensure that children are fully engaged and excited about their learning.

Assessment for learning

Assessment for Learning (AfL) is a vital ingredient to successful teaching and learning and is an integral part of every classroom. There are several aspects to AfL as shown in the diagram below:



Successful AfL involves:

- Teachers **and** pupils working together to identify where pupils are at in their learning
- The provision of **effective** feedback to pupils with clear next steps identified
- Teaching being **adapted** and **personalised** to meet individual needs
- Recognition of the influence assessment has on the **motivation** and **self-esteem** on pupils
- Pupils who are **actively involved** in their learning, able to assess themselves and understand how to improve

Components of AfL:

Learning objectives

These are shared with children in every lesson and are displayed clearly within the classroom. Focus is on what the children are learning rather than the activity or task. Teachers ensure that children are given the wider picture when sharing objectives, explaining how these will help the children in real life situations.

Success criteria

These break down the learning take place. The success criteria explains 'how' to meet the learning objective and includes the steps or 'ingredients' the children need to be successful in their learning. These are identified by the teacher during the planning process and shared or generated with the children during the lesson, written up and referred to throughout the lesson. Ultimately, the aim is that children can create their own success criteria as part of their step towards becoming independent learners.

Success criteria help children to reflect on the learning process, as a point of reference and providing them with a scaffold when they are stuck. They also enable children to self-evaluate, identifying their successes and next steps against the success criteria.

Feedback

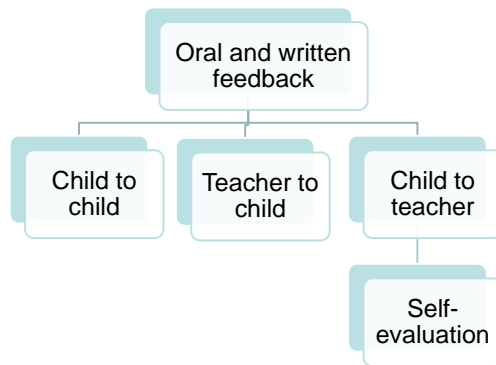
Feedback is a crucial ingredient of AfL and takes place, not only at the end of a piece of work, but throughout every lesson. The aim of feedback is:

- For children to know what they are doing well
- To give guidance on how to improve
- To cause deep thinking in the learner
- Increase self-reflection
- To lead to more rapid progress

To be effective, feedback must:

- Relate to the learning objective
- Use the success criteria.
- Find strengths first and then areas to improve.
- Use examples from the work in feedback.

There are many different forms of feedback in a primary school:



Oral feedback is extremely powerful and can be given at any point during a lesson, either on an individual basis, to a group or to the class. Plenaries are not just given at the end, but whenever needed during the lesson, reviewing progress towards the learning objective and success criteria, addressing misconceptions, making improvements or to add further challenge. They also give time to reflect on the 'how' of learning in addition to 'what' has been learnt.

Children are involved as much as possible in self-evaluating their work, through a variety of methods such as discussion, talk partners, text marking and commenting on their work with reference to the success criteria (*see marking policy for more details*). We also give children the opportunity to peer mark when appropriate, referring to the success criteria.

Written feedback is also extremely important and, to ensure children make rapid progress, we often set tasks for children to respond to when marking, to enable them to make improvements to their work. Time is given for children to read written comments and make a response, including corrections. For more details about written feedback, please refer to our marking policy.

Questioning

Questions are asked, not only to assess learning, but to challenge and deepen thinking and understanding. We aim to use as many open questions as possible to deepen children's understanding and to develop their reasoning skills, scaffolding our questioning techniques in line with Bloom's Taxonomy. As with all tasks and activities, questions are differentiated to

ensure they are matched to children's ability and are at the right level of challenge for all children. Opportunities are also given for children to develop their own questioning skills.

Targets

Children are involved in setting and reviewing their targets which are set for English and Maths. These are stuck into their books and referred to regularly. They are related to children's levels of attainment and next steps learning and are shared with parents.

The role of governors

The governors determine, support, monitor and review the school policies on teaching and learning through the work of the curriculum committee. The Curriculum and Assessment Committees operate termly meetings, discuss curriculum issues and invite staff to report on progress in the subjects for which they have responsibility. One of the roles of the governors on this committee is to ask questions such as "which interventions are most effective?" "Are children who are more vulnerable or very able making good progress?" "What evidence is there for a high standard of teaching?" etc. We are blessed with having a full complement of governors who challenge yet support school.

The role of parents

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We will increasingly be informing parents about what and how their children are learning by

- Holding parents workshops to explain our school's strategies for teaching in curriculum areas and posting them on our school website.
- Adding information to the school website, such as presentations by children explaining how maths is taught.
- Sending annual reports to parents in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can improve further.
- Explaining to parents how they can support their children with homework. We suggest, for example, regular shared reading with very young children, and support for older children with their projects and mental arithmetic homework.

We believe that parents have the 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, ensuring that they are receiving plenty of sleep on weekdays.
- 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.
- Fully support decisions made by the school in regard to behaviour.
- Assist or at least oversee their children's completion of their homework.

The Role of Children

To try their very best with their work, strive for high standards and 'have a go'.