



Bleakhouse Primary School Teaching, Learning, Curriculum and Assessment Policy

Rationale

The aim of this policy is to provide guidance on teaching, learning, curriculum and assessment in order to raise standards, improve pupil progress rates and to promote independent, lifelong learning.

Pupil's learning is central to the aims of the school. These aims are expressed, primarily, within our Mission Statement and are expanded upon within this policy. The school encourages all staff to recognise the importance of life-long learning and to continue their professional development in order to enhance the quality and standards of teaching, learning, curriculum and assessment.

Continuity, consistency and progression are central to our approach to curriculum content, delivery and assessment, school leadership and management, classroom management and organisation, the school environment and community.

What is learning? Some thoughts...

"Learning is defined as an alteration to long-term memory. If nothing has altered in long-term memory, nothing has been learned." (Sweller, Ayres and Kaluga, 2011)

Introduction

Learning needs to be Flexible and Durable. Flexible in that it can be applied to different contexts, subjects and situations (problem-solving, reasoning, application, explanation, interpretation.....) Durable in that it lasts (so it remains in long-term memory and can be retrieved). It may well need to be revisited many times until it becomes firmly embedded in the memory.

The curriculum must develop pupils' knowledge and skills in an interconnected way. Vocabulary, knowledge, ideas and concepts need to be developed through interconnected webs (Schemata). Prior-learning is paramount in strengthening the links between concepts and new knowledge.

Our school's curriculum includes all the planned activities that we organise in order to promote learning, personal growth and development. It includes, not only the formal requirements of the Early Years Framework and the National Curriculum but also, the various extra-curricular activities that the school organises in order to enrich the children's experience. It also includes the 'hidden curriculum'- what children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave.

We seek the highest standards of attainment for all our children. We also value the breadth and depth of the curriculum that we provide. We aim to foster creativity and to help our children to become independent learners. We believe in making learning enjoyable.

The Curriculum – Our Definition

The learning journey or learning experience that helps pupils acquire new knowledge, skills and understanding across a broad, balanced and relevant set of subjects and themes. It is more than just lessons it includes, the extra –curriculum and the hidden curriculum (relationships, approaches, aspirations, values and attitudes). Knowledge is 'generative' (or sticky) – the more you know, the easier it is to learn more. The more you know and learn, the more connections you are able to make. The more connections you make the stronger your web of understanding.

The more complex and embedded your understanding, the more you can use and apply the knowledge, skills and understanding you have acquired.

Curriculum Design

The design of our school's curriculum has three main parts:

INTENT: Why we make the choices we make based on what the pupils of Bleakhouse need.

What do our pupils need?

We think they need the following: Practical experiences, active engagement by the learner, repetition for recall, language development, vocabulary enhancement, phonics, reading for comprehension, reading for pleasure, problem-solving skills, promoting the development of creativity, questioning information provided, computing skills (including e-safety), values, deeper thinking and making connections between knowledge and learning.

IMPLEMENTATION: The framework or structure: What is taught, how and when? How is connectivity promoted? Opportunities to make links?
Please see our Curriculum Overview and Medium Term Planning.

IMPACT: We measure outcomes in terms of our pupils' improving knowledge and skills, improving results, improving progress, as evident in pupils' work in books. Importantly, we measure our pupils' enjoyment and engagement.

Aims and Intent

Our aim is that the children will grow into positive, independent, resilient, responsible people who can work and co-operate with others while at the same time developing knowledge and skills in order to achieve their potential.

The school's values are based on the Olympics and Paralympics values which are: friendship, respect, excellence, determination, courage, equality and inspiration.

The school's vision states that so we can inspire our children to succeed we will:

- Be a learning community;
- Enable every child to reach their full potential;
- Encourage children to become partners and take ownership of their learning;
- Enable every child to become a responsible and reliable member of society who understands the Fundamental British Values including democracy the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
- Ensure everyone is valued and appreciates all cultures and traditions, as well as appreciating the importance of Sustainable Development;
- Develop self-esteem in the whole school community;
- Develop positive and meaningful links with parents, engaging them in their children's education;
- Reflect the school in the community and the community in the school;
- Develop and extend Basic Skills in English, maths and technology;
- Work in partnership with others to offer opportunities for interactive, hands-on, personalised learning, using high quality IT resources as a vehicle to enable and empower children to become, anytime, anywhere learners in all aspects of the curriculum.

Organisation and Planning

Each year group plans for the academic year. This planning is overseen by the Assistant Head Teacher. Year group staff collaborate in order to share theme ideas and make links between areas of the curriculum and whole school events, for example focus weeks.

Outdoor learning takes place across the curriculum.

Medium term planning gives clear guidance on the objectives and teaching strategies for each theme. This planning is directly linked to the Early Years Framework, Development Matters Guidance and the National Curriculum. Short term planning is written on a weekly basis. This is used to set out the learning objectives and success criteria for each session

and identifies the resources and activities to be used in the lesson. It also identifies how the differing needs of individuals and groups will be met.

Throughout the school we adopt an inter-disciplinary approach to curriculum planning which aims to link the topics within various subjects/ Early Years seven areas of learning. We plan the curriculum carefully so that there is coherent and full coverage of all aspects of the Early Years Framework and the National Curriculum, there is opportunity to apply learning from other subjects such as using graphs in science or report writing in geography and there is planned progression in all subjects. However, there are instances where subjects are taught more discretely.

Documents available in school to support planning include:

- National Curriculum
- Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum
- National Curriculum Progression Book
- Subject Handbooks
- Knowledge Organisers

Progress

Progress means knowing and remembering more.

Prior learning allows learning of new content.

The curriculum must allow pupils to learn powerful, transferable and sequenced knowledge. (Please see the Curriculum Progression Book.)

The Curriculum and Inclusion

The curriculum is designed to be accessed by all children who attend the school. If we think it necessary to modify some children's access to the curriculum, in order to meet their needs, this is agreed in consultation with parents. Information on how the needs of children with Special Educational Needs and Disability are met is found in the SEND and Inclusion Policy and the Disability Equality Scheme.

The Role of the Subject Leader

The role of the subject leader is to:

- Provide strategic lead and direction for the subject
- Support and advise colleagues on issues related to the subject
- Monitor pupils' progress in that subject area
- To hold other teachers to account for the progress of children in the subject
- Provide efficient resource management for the subject
- Monitor and review the subject across the school
- Report to Governors as necessary.

Classroom Management and Organisation

Classroom management and organisation is an important aspect of raising standards in teaching, learning and assessment. A uniform, consistent approach improves continuity and progression and ensures that children are aware of teachers' high expectations. This helps them to overcome barriers to their learning to achieve their full potential. Children need to have a sense of ownership within their classroom and should be involved in dialogue about how the room can be accessible to support everybody's learning.

Pupil Response

- Pupils respond to effective lessons by showing their engagement, enthusiasm and motivation for learning.
- During lessons pupils ask questions and are encouraged to follow their own line of enquiry.
- Pupil-to-pupil dialogue encourages children to share and peer-assess their learning.
- Pupil- teacher dialogue, focused on children making progress (including during Pupil Conferences) is an important assessment tool such as for the use of technical or key vocabulary.

- Pupils demonstrate their learning in lessons as knowledge only becomes knowledge through shared understanding between individuals.

Environment

We will endeavour to create a safe, secure and stimulating environment by:

- Motivating the children through visual and tactile displays which both support and promote learning.
- Provide relevant, updated resources that are conducive to learning.
- Installing and monitoring adequate security systems.
- Completing risk assessments on a regular basis and actively monitoring hazards within school.
- Continuing the 'Healthy Schools' status of Bleakhouse Primary School.
- Sharing models of success in children's work.

Community

We will create a school which is an integral part of the community it serves by:

- Making use of opportunities, as they arise, to bring the community into school and to take the school into the community.
- Creating a partnership with parents to assist in the development and education of each child in particular through home learning activities.
- Supporting Parents to overcome barriers to their own and their children's learning.
- Using the community as a valuable and exciting resource that provides opportunities for children to learn through first hand experience.
- Developing respect and tolerance towards the local community and society and to develop a sense of citizenship that includes an understanding of the fundamental British Values.
- Creating mutual respect towards different cultures and developing awareness of the children's growing responsibility towards each other and the community.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

In addition to the formative (AfL) assessment, outlined above, summative assessments are carried out at regular intervals throughout the year. These tests and data from Teacher Assessment (including against the Early Learning Goals and the National Curriculum Year Group, Age-Related Expectations) are used in order to make judgements about pupils' performance in relation to national standards. The data collected from such assessments is valuable to teachers and for leadership and management purposes.

Responsibilities

The governing body is committed to the importance of effective assessment. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher, supported by senior staff to ensure the implementation of this policy and guidance.

Teachers are required to:

- Provide feedback (written (when appropriate) and oral) to children to encourage dialogue and develop the self-assessment skills of learners.
- Share expectations with learners through learning objectives (linked to the criteria in the Early Years Framework and in the National Curriculum). These expectations will be reflected in the feedback teachers give.
- The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring all statutory tests are conducted in line with the national guidelines.

Assessment Records

- A record of all summative assessments, conducted throughout the year, are kept by teachers and analysed centrally.
- Year 1 to Year 6 tests and/or teacher assessment are recorded November, February and June.

- ETFS the LA summative data sheets are completed November, February and June.
- This record is used as a tool to show children's progress throughout the Key Stage and is used by Senior Leaders and Managers as part of the target setting, the Appraisal Process and in Pupil Progress meetings.
- It is the responsibility of the class teacher to ensure that the up-to-date information is recorded, including group and intervention data.
- The National Curriculum Progression Book provides an overview and the progression of the curriculum across the school.
- Individual children have Pupil Conference targets set during Pupil Conferences in September and February. This enables pupils to discuss their progress with their class teacher and also recognise their own progress.
- Subject specific Handbooks outline the assessment protocols and expectations for each area of the curriculum. These include the use of POP Tasks, Testbase, Kahoot, Knowledge Organisers and Recap Sheets.
- Children with Special Educational Needs also have assessment information contained within the termly reviews of their SEND Provision Plans (please refer to the SEND and Inclusion Policy).

Statutory Assessment

The school completes and reports in line with statutory requirements. At the present time these are:

- Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)
- Year 1 Phonics Screening
- Year 2 Phonics Screening Re-take
- Year 2 SATs and End of Key Stage Teacher Assessment
- Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check (MTC)
- Year 6 SATs and End of Key Stage Teacher Assessment

Methods of Reporting

- Parents have the opportunity to make an appointment to talk to the teacher about their child's progress on Parents' Evenings held each term. Individual Pupil Conference Record sheets are discussed at these appointments during the Autumn and Spring Terms.
- A written report is sent to parents towards the end of the Summer Term.
- Parents are also encouraged to talk to teachers whenever they are concerned about their child and they are able to look at records for their child kept on file at school.
- The school reports assessment data in line with the statutory regulations including end of Key Stage 1 and 2 data.

Home Learning

At Bleakhouse we believe home learning should be a proactive home learning experience. Children are given an activity from across the curriculum (theme-linked) each fortnight in addition to the expectation that they will read regularly to an adult and complete maths activities. The activities allow each child to complete them in their preferred learning style so that they are able to demonstrate the learning and understanding creatively. Pre-learning is also used to enable a child to be familiar with topics in upcoming lessons so that time in lessons is maximised to support learning of new materials not simply revisiting previous learning. Information about Home Learning and others ways to support children's is available to pupils and parents on the school website. (See Home Learning Policy 2023).

Monitoring and Review

There is a named Governor assigned to particular subjects within the curriculum. These Governors liaise with the respective subject leaders and monitor the way in which these subjects are taught. There is also a named governor assigned to SEND and Child Protection.

The Headteacher is responsible for the day-to-day organisation of the teaching and learning while the Assistant Headteacher acts as curriculum lead, overseeing curriculum development planning. The Headteacher and Senior Deputy Headteacher organise the monitoring of teaching and learning as well as curriculum development and receive feedback from Assistant Head Teacher and Subject Leaders.

With the Assistant Head Teacher, Subject Leaders also monitor the way in which their subject is taught throughout the school. They examine long-term and medium-term planning and ensure that appropriate teaching strategies are used. Subject Leaders also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.

This policy is reviewed every three years.

Equal Opportunities and Racial Equality

At Bleakhouse Primary School we are committed to equality of opportunity for all children, parents/guardians, members of staff, governors and visitors to the school. We aim to ensure that no-one is discriminated against on the grounds of race, ethnicity, gender, disability, colour, age, nationality, marital status, sexual orientation, trade union activity, political or religious belief. We aim to take positive steps towards raising awareness of these issues in order to develop our children as tolerant, responsible citizens in a multi-cultural society.

Other Relevant Documents:

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy
SEND and Inclusion Policy
Subject Handbooks
Home Learning Policy
Documents as published by STA
Staff Handbook

JEB, RS, AM, EMcG. June 2023

Teaching, Learning, Curriculum and Assessment Guidelines

Classrooms

Classrooms should be arranged so that:

- There is good access in, out and around.
- The pupils can move freely.
- There is provision for individual and group work.
- They are safe, stimulating and relevant to the intended learning, therefore, demonstrating evidence of the current theme.
- Key subject specific vocabulary accessible to children.
- Learning is supported through display, models and any other appropriate resources (including resources to support the teaching, learning and assessment in maths) readily available.
- Displays balance supporting children's learning and celebrating their work.
- Working Walls for English and maths next to the screens in Key Stage 2/carpet area in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 updated weekly. In addition Early Years Foundation Stage have the language rich environment updated weekly.
- Classrooms change for each new theme and to support a 'stunning start'.

- In Early Years there is continuous provision to the outdoor environment.

Resources

- The children should know the location and systems for the storage of resources.
- They should have free access to all resources, including ICT, (except those that are dangerous when used without supervision). Consideration needs to be given to how resources are stored to allow ease of access.
- Resources should be clearly labelled and the children should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own classrooms/ outdoor area by tidying and replenishing resources and taking care of them so that others may use them.
- Resources should be appropriate and up to date.
- Personal items such as books and folders should be stored so that they are accessible and respected.
- It is the teachers' responsibility to ensure that there are enough readily available resources for all the children **prior** to the start of lessons. (Pencils, glue sticks, photocopied resources, scissors, Dienes, colouring pencils, wax crayons, choice of paper....).
- Maths equipment is stored in each classroom and Early Years outdoor area. This is readily available to support access outside of maths lessons.

Atmosphere

- The room should be inviting and interesting. Children's work should be displayed in a pleasing way so as to add value to the work and help raise self-esteem. Items of interest such as, comics, catalogues and articles could be displayed or stored in the classroom.
- The classroom should be tidy and free from clutter. Everyone is expected to keep all areas of the classroom tidy.
- The classroom needs to be comfortable, there needs to be a working atmosphere and work needs to be planned so that each child has a sense of attainment and progress and inclusion within the lesson/group/class.
- An agreed code of conduct, in line with the Behaviour Management Policy, needs to be negotiated between all staff (including MDS staff) and children and it should be adhered to. Positive behaviour should be recognised and rewarded using praise, stickers, stars or table points.
- There should be equality for all children. Each child should be treated with respect and should be encouraged to treat others with respect.
- Children should be encouraged to be independent and to take responsibility for an increasing amount of their learning, developing good attitudes to learning. This should be discussed with the child as part of their pupil conference.

Planning

- Planning is informed by the Bleakhouse Progression Book and shows a clear learning journey that includes opportunities to revisit prior learning.
- Opportunities for language development and phonics/reading are emphasised.
- Teachers in year groups should plan work together. Regular dialogue with Teaching Assistants (TA) ensures the sharing of information about individuals and groups attainment and progress. This supports the use of Assessment for Learning (AfL).
- Consistent planning is completed by all using the agreed proformas for each area of the curriculum.
- Planning clearly identifies Pupil Premium/Disadvantaged, SEND, EAL and other vulnerable groups of pupils so that these groups of children's needs are met.
- Planning needs to be informed by prior assessment data and its analysis, both summative and formative. It should be rigorous, with well-defined objectives and with regard for the requirements of the National Curriculum or the Early Years Framework.

- Reflective evaluations are completed, and focus on the impact of lessons on children's learning, so as to inform future planning.
- Planning needs to accommodate a range of ability levels and be appropriately differentiated in ALL subjects/ seven areas of learning and support all children from all groups (disadvantaged, SEND and EAL etc.) to overcome their barriers to learning to achieve at least in line with their peers nationally. Planning should create possibilities for pupils to work at greater depth.
- EYFS Planning is also included in the EYFS Policy.

Delivery

- Fostering a team approach to planning will lead to common approaches to delivery.
- Subject co-ordinators should support teachers in strategies for delivery.
- Teachers keep records of what the children have experienced and achieved in order to avoid the 'perception gap' – the gap that may present between what is believed to be happening and what is actually going on.
- Evaluation of how well lessons were delivered by the teacher in respect of the impact on the children's learning will inform future planning.
- Effective teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage includes:
 - Playing and exploring – finding out and exploring; playing with what they know and being willing to have a go.
 - Active learning – being involved and concentrating; keep trying and enjoying achieving what they set out to do
 - Creating and thinking critically – having their own ideas; making links and choosing ways to do things
- Child initiated learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage includes:
 - Children engaging in a self-chosen pursuit
 - Children taking ownership of an activity and 'subverting' it to a different purpose from the one planned
- Children bringing something to class (can be a physical object or an experience)

Teaching Strategies

- Quality adult interactions support the effective learning by children across the whole school.
- A range of teaching strategies and Learning Styles (Visual, Auditory, Kinaesthetic) are employed. Teachers will use the approach that best fits the content to be delivered, the resources, the nature of the task and the class, groups or individuals to whom the lesson is being taught enabling personalised and accelerated provision.
- Teachers should create an atmosphere where participation is the norm and where children feel comfortable in both asking and answering questions. It should be safe to make mistakes and for misconceptions to be addressed in a supportive way, as this is how we learn best.
- A range of questioning and answering techniques will be employed; this includes the use of Higher Order Questions, open and closed questions that are most appropriate to the task. (See Bloom's Taxonomy).
- Questions are carefully worded so that they become a key strategy in differentiation and assessment.
- Teachers' questions prompt children to use their existing knowledge and to explain their reasoning. It is recognised that questioning that seeks explanation or probing of a child's ideas and understanding having the greatest impact on the learner.
- Effective questioning techniques help to assess knowledge, skills and understanding. They help children to think more deeply.
- All staff give status to children's responses by setting clear expectations that everyone will listen.

- Text books and worksheets are used carefully to support differentiated tasks, provide a structure for essential practice and support good classroom management in line with the children's identified learning needs.
- Text books and worksheets maximise learning only when they are clear, differentiated and fit for purpose.
- Those pupils who are at risk of falling behind, or who need to catch-up with their peers, need to be differentiated for and the differences diminished quickly (Disadvantaged/Pupil Premium, FSM, EAL/ Gender differences).
- Children should be trained to draw their own charts, tables and diagrams as well as answering questions in full sentences. They should not be merely completing commercially produced worksheets or writing one word answers.
- In each topic there needs to be opportunities to learn by doing to support kinaesthetic learning and to write at length.
- Feedback from children (from observations, Pupil Conferences and from ongoing discussions regarding next steps and targets) will inform planning of future activities and learning opportunities.
- Feedback from Staff is provided to specifically move learning on. Pupils are given time at the beginning of each day to respond to feedback tasks provided by the teacher. Children who are not present at this time may be asked to complete these tasks during playtime or lunchtime.
- More able children should be challenged with a focus on depth of understanding and application of skills learned.
- Also see the Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Assessment for Learning (AfL)

The objectives of Assessment for Learning are as follows:

1. To support a personalised approach to teaching and learning.
 2. To use evidence from summative assessment alongside data from Teacher Assessment, to inform classroom practice and to enhance the quality of feedback to children.
 3. To help children to become proactive and more independent in understanding and identifying their achievements and continued progression.
 4. To ensure consistency as each year group implements a team approach to AfL.
 5. Assessment for Learning supports appropriate planning, teaching and learning for children with additional needs. The process allows for suitably differentiated work to suit the individual needs of all children including appropriate aspects of interventions to be deployed. This allows us to set suitable learning challenges that enable the child to learn more effectively.
- Expectations are shared with the children in each lesson supported by modelling and success criteria. The outcomes from all of the assessment strategies are used to inform and guide planning in the long, medium and short term. They are recorded through annotation of planning and evaluations of lessons taught.
 - Also see the Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Marking and Feedback

- Feedback, which may be given verbally or in writing, should address misunderstandings. This is most effective 'in the moment' and where possible should happen during the lesson and not afterwards. A VF code will be used in the child's book to show verbal feedback has been given.
- All written feedback will be completed in green ink by teachers and black ink by support staff.
- Marking and feedback should be linked to the specific aspects of the learning objective. Next step in learning are shared either verbally or in written feedback.
- Marking should address GPAS errors and careless mistakes. This may be an individualised approach or whole class if the errors are common.

- Where possible, set the children gap/feedback tasks to consolidate or extend their learning either in the lesson or at the start of the next day.
 - Pupils are given a range of opportunities to develop their learning using the various assessment strategies used in the classroom as these support a structured, focused conversation between the teacher and learner. These include verbal feedback, targets in books from Individual Pupil Conferences, Pupil Conference Record Sheets, verbal targets, peer assessment, self-assessment, help cards, observation, teacher-pupil discussions. Targets are agreed with children and shared with parents as appropriate.
 - Focused written feedback should be given in Writing and Maths for each child when appropriate. Models of such marking are available from SLT.
 - Whenever appropriate or possible, teachers should provide feedback proactively (live marking) identifying where the child can make improvements. Teachers have a whole class feedback grid they can use to keep a record of their live marking.
 - Children should receive feedback, either written or verbally, frequently and this should lead to them making rapid progress towards their learning objectives.
 - Teachers may identify good parts of a child's work by either highlighting it in green or using their green pen to tick the parts they are pleased with.
 - Teachers may use a yellow highlighter to identify parts of a child's that could be improved.
 - Marking should not confuse attainment (the stage the children attain) with achievement (how successful they are in relation to their potential). The emphasis should be on the progress and feedback should help children to improve.
- A PEN (Praise Error Next) strategy should be used when providing feedback, considering individual children's progress and attainment.
- Marking standards and procedures should be consistently applied throughout the school by all staff involved in the process.
 - For written feedback to be meaningful, children must understand any comment made on their work. Time must be given for children to read, reflect and if necessary possibly respond to the comments.