



Teaching and Learning Policy Oct 2014

Related Policies/documents:

Assessment Policy
Behaviour Policy
Curriculum Policy
Display Policy
Early Years Foundation Stage Policy
Equal Opportunities Policy
Feedback and Marking Policy
Special Educational Needs Policy
Subject policies (Literacy, Mathematics etc)

Introduction

At Walmore Hill Primary School we support 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. Through our teaching we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives. Ongoing improvements of Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategies are a key feature of our school improvement work.

Aims and objectives

Our School Aim is that children, staff and parents work actively in partnership to enable all children to realise their full potential.

Through our teaching we aim to:

- enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring, independent and reflective learners;
- foster children's self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with other people;
- develop children's self-respect and encourage children to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others;
- show respect for all 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 this community;
- enable children to grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens.

Effective teaching and learning

Personalised learning is at the heart of effective teaching and learning. At Walmore Hill, we recognise the need to develop strategies that will allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them so that they may fulfil their potential. Many learning opportunities are made available to the children that take account of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning styles. Such opportunities include:

- investigation and problem solving;
- research and finding out;
- group work;
- paired work;
- independent work;
- whole-class work;
- asking and answering questions;
- use of ICT;
- a range of experiences - fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest;
- visitors into our school
- creative activities;
- debates, role-plays and oral presentations and drama
- designing and making things;
- global and sustainability work
- participation in athletic or physical activity
- outside classroom/environment

We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn - what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn (Assessment for Learning).

Effective teaching and learning is characterised by the following features of Personalised Learning:

1. 'Quality first' teaching and learning
2. Target setting and tracking
3. Focused assessment
4. Intervention as appropriate
5. Pupil grouping
6. The learning environment
7. Curriculum organisation
8. The extended curriculum
9. Supporting children's wider needs
10. Safeguarding (see safeguarding file for all related policies)

1. 'Quality first' teaching and learning

This is characterised by an emphasis on Assessment for Learning strategies:

- Highly focused lesson design with sharp objectives, shared with children (WALTs)
- High expectations of pupil involvement and engagement with their learning

- High levels of interaction for all pupils
- Teacher questioning, modelling and explaining
- Appropriate differentiation based on assessments to provide challenge and support
- Day to day observations and informal assessments used to inform further teaching and learning
- An emphasis on learning through dialogue, with regular opportunities for pupils to talk individually and in groups
- An expectation that pupils will accept responsibility for their own learning and work independently
- Praise and encouragement to motivate pupils further

2. Target setting and tracking

Individual pupils' progress is tracked, together with that of cohorts and specific groups throughout the school. We use a range of performance measures including teacher assessment and test results. Strengths and areas for development are identified to inform planning and to implement intervention programmes as appropriate. Data is collected on a regular basis and is shared with the staff, pupils and parents. Tracking includes sublevels and average point scores.

Pupil progress meetings are held regularly to identify strengths/weaknesses in performance and/or identify CPD requirements.

Pupil achievements are central to target setting and the review of performance and target setting.

Parents/carers receive regular updates on their child's progress so that they can provide support/encouragement as appropriate.

The Head teacher and subject leaders monitor pupil progress through regular lesson observations, pupil interviews, book and planning scrutiny.

3. Focused assessment

Secure knowledge of each pupil's current progress is a core element of teaching and learning at Walmore Hill.

Lesson planning is based on prior learning and throughout the learning process, active assessment is required to ensure that the expected rate of progress is being made.

Fundamental to our formative assessment procedures is Assessment for Learning (AfL).

A range of AfL strategies are used in the classroom:-

- Learning objectives (WALTs We Are Learning To...) and individual or group targets are made explicit and shared with the pupils.
- Success criteria (WILFs What I'm Looking For...) are agreed by the pupils and teacher.
- Self and peer assessment is used against the success criteria.
- Pupils are engaged in their learning and receive immediate feedback on their progress.
- Marking is detailed and focussed on success criteria and individual targets and needs (see Feedback and Marking policy)

Summative assessment opportunities are used throughout the year. These include optional and end of KS tests, standardised tests in spelling and reading and Rising Stars assessments.

Regular continuous assessment is central to teaching and learning practice, including the Early Years Foundation Stage profile , Early Learning Goals and Development Matters. Staff use APP (Assessing Pupil Progress) in Reading, Writing Maths for Y2 and Y6 and National Curriculum objectives in Y1, 3, 4, and 5. Assessment information is used in tracking grids throughout the school.

4. Intervention

It is expected that the great majority of pupils at Walmore Hill will make at least the expected rate of progress through quality first class based teaching. This is supported by differentiated activities led by our experienced teaching assistants. Some children benefit from additional small group or 1:1 intervention programmes to enable them to make the progress required to achieve their full potential.

Central to the effective planning of an intervention programme is the knowledge the teacher has of a particular pupil or groups of pupils. When considering pupils for either Wave 2 or Wave 3 interventions, a wide range of assessment evidence is drawn upon to support judgements made about pupil progress, including discussion with SENCo and teaching assistants and parents.

Teaching Assistants are a valuable part of our team and they work with groups to support learning and assessment.

5. Pupil Grouping

All classes are mixed ability and mixed year groups. In order to meet the learning objectives and learning needs and provide appropriate challenge and support for all pupils, teachers use a range of grouping options within their classes.

- ability groups
- skills based grouping (guided reading/writing)
- mixed ability groups
- paired work (response partners) to facilitate discussion
- individual work
- pupil choice
- whole class groups

6. The Learning Environment

Our classrooms and school buildings are attractive learning environments. Our Display Policy emphasises the regular changing of displays, to ensure that 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. Interactive 'working walls' are used to engage pupils and encourage self-help strategies.

All classrooms are equipped with an interactive whiteboard and we have a well stocked library and good topic boxes of resources.

We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by the children. We have several areas in school for small group intervention work or 1:1 tuition.

7. Curriculum Organisation

We have a creative, skills based curriculum. We run a two year rolling Long Term Topic Plan. The National Curriculum is used to guide our teaching. These set out the aims and objectives of what is to be taught in each year group. Our medium and short term lesson plans contain information about the WALTs and WILFs for teaching and learning activities, skills to be taught and tasks to be set. We ensure that our local area is reflected in the curriculum we offer.

We aim to cater for the needs and interests of a full range of learners including:

- the more able/gifted and talented
- learners with learning difficulties and disabilities
- learners with English as an additional language
- children from travelling families
- looked after children
- learners with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties

8. The Extended Curriculum

Helping pupils to discover and/or develop new interests is essential to personalised learning at Walmore Hill. During the school year a range of activities are organised to enhance the curriculum:-

- Educational trips - it is expected that classes arrange trips/visitors at least twice a year
- Residential visits
- Extra- curricular clubs for all ages, abilities and interests, including external providers such as musical instrument teachers and sports coaches
- Visitors to school
- Links with Woodside Primary and their twinning with a Kenyan primary school

The school provides a room for 'Bright Horizons' Early Years provision for three and four year olds, twice a week.

We ensure that all tasks and activities that the children do are safe. When we plan to take children out of school, we first inform parents and obtain their permission. In so doing, we follow the LA guidance on Off-Site visits and volunteers. Staff complete detailed risk assessments which are authorised by the Educational Visit Co-ordinator (EVC).

9. Supporting children's wider needs

Schools that are able to identify barriers to learning beyond the classroom and address them are in a strong position to provide personalised learning for individual pupils. At Walmore Hill, we aim to establish good relationships with all our families and to provide a climate open to dialogue. We can offer advice and support through school based services, for example:

- Regular meetings between staff and parents
- Regular newsletters (usually weekly)

- Speech and Language therapy
- Pastoral and family support
- Other external agencies

Where additional support from other agencies is required, a 'team around the child' approach may be needed. Walmore Hill uses the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) to identify barriers to learning and as a result meetings, involving a range of multi-agency professionals, are set up.

10. Safeguarding

Within our curriculum children are taught how to look after themselves and how to keep themselves safe. We also have visits from our Community Police Officer to raise awareness eg of road safety.

Excellence and Effort are celebrated

- our weekly achievement assembly celebrates work done in class, outside achievements, and sporting success
- school events such as concerts are seen as opportunities for all pupils to demonstrate their own best performance
- the website is used to celebrate achievements
- pupils are encouraged to believe that any work exhibited (performance or display) should be their highest standards.

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 helping to allocate resources effectively
- ensure that the school buildings and premises promote successful teaching and learning
- ensure that high quality staff are appointed
- monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment through link visits to the school, at Curriculum and Standards committee meetings and in consultation with subject leaders
- ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching and learning

Partnership with parents

Parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn at school. We inform parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- sending class newsletters to parents at the start of each term in which we outline the curriculum that the children will be studying during that term at school;
- sending out regular newsletters informing parents of important dates, activities, celebrating successes etc.
- 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/or investigative work
- holding parents' evenings which provide an opportunity to discuss progress children are making.

Occasional open mornings so that parents can get a sense of how children are taught in school.

The role of Parents

We believe that parents, as their child's primary educator, have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. Parents have a responsibility to:-

- ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible;
- participating in discussions with teachers, concerning their child's progress and attainment.
- ensure that their child is supported with homework activities which consolidate learning
- promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general;
- fulfil the requirements set out in the home/school agreement.
- inform us of their child's interests and capabilities
- do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school;
- inform school if there are matters outside school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school;
- ensure that emergency contact details are up to date and accurate.
- providing support for the behaviour policy within the school and for the teacher's role
- ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and PE kit;

The role of the child

We believe that the child has a responsibility to:

- participate as fully as possible in the learning opportunities and help other children to do the same
- be organised bringing necessary kit, taking letters home promptly, returning reading books regularly
- work hard and try his/her best
- behave appropriately in school according to the school's behaviour code
- be polite and helpful to other pupils and adults in school
- come to school regularly and be on time
- talk at home about what he/she has learnt at school
- take good care of the school environment
- do homework regularly and bring it back to school
- wear the correct school uniform
- tell the teacher or an adult at home if he/she finds the work difficult

Monitoring and review

All our teachers reflect on their strengths/areas for development and their professional development needs are planned for accordingly. We provide internal and external guidance to support our teachers in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding so that they can continually improve their practice.

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

Equality Statement

The school is committed to ensuring that all groups prosper, including those:

- with special educational needs;
- who have difficulties accessing the school;
- who speak English as an additional language;
- who have frequent moves and/or lack stability leading to time out of school (e.g. children in care);
- who as children are caring for others;
- who come from homes with low income and/or inadequate home study space;
- who experience bullying, harassment or social exclusion;
- with low parental support or different parent expectations;
- with emotional, mental and physical well being needs;
- who exhibit challenging behaviour;
- who come from ethnic minority groups including travellers, refugees and asylum seekers.

Date this policy was adopted_____

Signed by Chair of Curriculum and Standards Committee _____

Review date_____