

St Aidan's Catholic Primary School

"Living and growing in Christ"

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY



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Aims of Policy

- To define our shared understanding of what good learning and teaching look like.
- To promote continuity of practice and ensure a shared entitlement for all children.
- To provide direction and guidance for temporary staff and those new to our school.
- To provide a clarity of expectation across our school.

At St. Aidan's we understand learning to be

- The progressive acquisition of skills and knowledge
- The development of understanding of self and others
- The capacity to continue to grow and develop
- The application of existing knowledge to new situations
- An active process
- Reflecting and evaluating

We understand teaching to be ...

- Discussing and questioning
- Reinforcing and extending
- Clarifying and evaluating
- Creating opportunities
- Explaining and demonstrating
- Modelling and illustrating
- Celebrating and affirming

Our commitment is to grow learners who understand they can be anything they want to be:

- Mathematicians/ writers
- Readers/ scientists
- Philosophers/ Computer Scientists
- Artists/ Design Technologists
- Historians/ Geographers
- Sports people or whatever comes next...

At St. Aidan's we believe children learn best when:

- They understand the purpose of their learning.
- They are happy, secure and confident.
- The curriculum offered is motivating and stimulating.
- There is regular assessment for learning, where children and teachers are clear about the next steps.
- They are given time to think.
- Time is given for reinforcement and consolidation.

We will promote a learning ethos by:

- Promoting a learning dialogue in every classroom by modelling the subject specific vocab.
- Developing a collaborative learning culture through, for example, the use of talk partners and flexible group work.
- Explicitly teaching children about the characteristics of good learners which promotes a growth mindset and a 'have a go' culture.
- Ensuring children are clear about how they can improve.
- Teaching children to reflect and self-evaluate their own learning and to recognise success.
- Using a variety of questions to challenge children's thinking and to help them make meaningful links across areas of their learning.

Our Learning Environment

At St. Aidan's all classrooms are organised to:

- Promote independence
- Encourage children to make an appropriate choice of resources and to treat them with respect
- Foster a 'can do' culture

We do this by:

- Providing well organised classrooms with clearly labelled, accessible resources.
- Establishing clear routines for learning, training children to care for equipment and encouraging a shared sense of ownership and responsibility.
- Ensuring that classrooms are safe, inviting, tidy and organised to reflect the needs of our children.
- Using displays to celebrate achievement and promote learning.

Key features of effective planning

At St. Aidan's our planning will contain:

- Clear learning questions/ Objectives.
- Specific lesson vocab which links to the learning.

Key Elements and Principles of Teaching and Learning at St. Aidan's

Summary

All lessons should include the following key elements to ensure high quality teaching and learning.

Clear Learning Objectives

Learning objectives are shared orally and displayed in child-friendly language.

- Learning objectives begin with 'As a Mathematician/writer I can.....'
- Pupils write the learning intention in their books according to their age and ability.
- When marking pupils' work, the main focus is on meeting the learning objective.

Clearly Differentiated

- All learners are challenged appropriately. It is the entitlement of every child to have his/her learning needs and abilities catered for.
- It is the responsibility of the teacher to find effective ways of managing pupils' needs and abilities and to match them to appropriate and effective learning styles.
- Differentiation needs to be planned for.
- Learning may be differentiated by support, outcome, ability, interest, task, text or resources.

Active Engagement in Learning

- Pupils are actively engaged during all parts of the lesson – teachers take into account pupils' concentration span and ensure they are not sitting passively for long periods.
- Opportunities for paired or group discussions feature as appropriate.
- Mini whiteboards are used as appropriate for short bursts of activity, to develop understanding and to ensure pupils are active and engaged during the lesson.
- Visuals, artefacts and auditory input are all used creatively as a way to enhance learning.

Feedback which Enhances Learning

- AfL and quality marking is embedded in everyday practice and is used to inform teaching and learning.
- All pupils are clear about how they need to improve.
- Marking is linked to the learning intention and identifies next step prompts as outlined within the School's Marking Policy.

A Guide to a Basic Lesson Structure

All lessons should follow a basic structure. This is an example structure but in ways definitive:

- **Locate-** Set the scene, place learning in wider context, link to prior learning; review previous lesson; provide the 'big picture'; share learning objectives.
- **Teach-** pupils receive new information; instruction/exposition.
- **Do -** pupils make sense of information; processing; understanding.
- **Review-** review information and plan next steps.

Within or as part of each phase, strategies including mini-plenaries and other AFL strategies will be implemented.

Precise interpretation of the four-part structure will inevitably be very different in different situations. Age, ability, timing of the lesson, subject area and the particular focus for the lesson will all have a significant impact.

Teachers may well scroll through the phases more than once during the lesson. For example, after a short period of exposition, pupils may be engaged in an activity designed to help them make sense of new material. This may be followed by another period of exposition and an appropriate exercise (**mini plenaries**).

The phases are not always sequential. Review, for example, is not confined to the end of the lessons. **Good teachers weave review through the entire lesson and know that success criteria are only successful when repeated and referred to throughout the lesson.**

Teaching and learning are not the same thing. Encountering information is not the same as understanding it. While the stages are inextricably linked, they are separate processes. This must be reflected in the lesson.

Roles and Responsibilities

This policy outlines the respective roles and responsibilities of different members of our school community in the teaching and learning process.

Teachers

- Are responsible for the learning and welfare of children in their class and share a collective responsibility for all our children's learning.
- Will report regularly to parents on their children's progress and actively support our parent partnership.

Teachers and TAs

- Will demonstrate a commitment to the school's learning ethos and will actively promote all opportunities for learning.
- Will be proactive in their own professional development.

Senior Leadership Team

- Will provide learning centred leadership.
- Will support staff to enable them to carry out their roles effectively and ensure an appropriate work/life balance.
- Will actively support the professional development of all colleagues.
- Will support class teachers to meet the welfare and wellbeing needs of our most vulnerable children.

Teaching Assistants

- Will assist the learning of all children under the direction of the class teacher.
- Will share co-responsibility for the creation and maintenance of an effective and safe learning environment.
- Along with teachers, will demonstrate a commitment to the learning ethos of the school and actively promote opportunities for children's learning.

Non class-based staff

- MDS will ensure our children are safe and return to afternoon lessons ready to learn.
- Office staff, will take responsibility for the smooth running of day-to-day administration, freeing teachers and TAs to focus on children's learning.
- Premises staff will ensure a safe, clean and well-maintained learning environment both indoors and out.
- Technical support staff will ensure resources are available and utilised effectively to further enhance the learning of our children.

Governors

- Will provide support and encouragement to maintain our focus on further developing our learning community
- Will hold our school accountable for the quality of teaching and learning.

Parents

- Will ensure children attend regularly, on time and are ready to learn.
- Will support the work of the school including supporting children's learning at home.
- When available, will enhance learning opportunities further by supporting the work of staff in the classroom.

Children

- Will respect the rights of others to learn and their teachers to teach.
- Will try hard and aim to do their best.
- Will take increasing responsibility for their own learning (under the guidance of staff) as they move up through the school.
- Actively contribute to the classroom learning community.

Monitoring arrangements

The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team.