

## Teaching and Learning Policy

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### Introduction

At Thackley Primary School we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the notion that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone; it should be fun. 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.

### Aims and Objectives

This teaching and learning policy is intended to promote consistency, high standards and the achievement of the school aims. At Thackley we aim to provide a caring, supportive and stimulating environment with high quality teaching through which we foster...

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A high level of English and Maths skills and an enquiring mind which wants to learn more each day;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent young people who are confident, flexible and able to cooperate with others;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Imagination and creative expression through a wide range of media;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conscientious young citizens of our multi-cultural society who are tolerant and respect others' values;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pride in achievement and a desire to succeed;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective links between the school, the child's home and the community which promote aspiration and high expectations;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality of opportunity for all;</li> </ul>

### Effective 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. We therefore offer opportunities for children to learn in a variety of ways including:

investigation and problem solving;	•	whole class work;	•	watching television and responding to musical or tape recorded material, on-line or downloaded;
research and finding out;	•	questioning;	•	debates, role plays and oral presentations;
group work;	•	use of the computer;	•	designing and making things;
pair work;	•	fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest;	•	participation in physical activity;
independent work;	•	creative activities;	•	reflecting on what has been learned

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. Self review and peer review strategies are used, as well as planned plenary at the end of lessons to review the key learning objectives and to assess the level of understanding.

### **Effective Teaching**

When teaching we focus on motivating children and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. We use curriculum plans based on DCFS, QCA schemes and the children's selection of key topics to guide our teaching. This sets out the aims, objective and details of what is to be taught to each year group.

We believe children learn effectively when the teacher provides:

•	thorough preparation;	•	an atmosphere where children are prepared to take risks;	•	lessons where children's previous learning and interests are built upon, through purposeful application of knowledge to different situations;
•	shared learning intentions which are understood by the pupils;	•	innovative teaching;	•	opportunities to review and reflect on the learning;
•	clear expectations of what pupils are expected to achieve by the	•	appropriate pace to the lesson;	•	thinking time before answering questions

	end of the session;				
•	open-ended, thought provoking, challenging questions of the children;	•	a planned programme of educational visits to reinforce and stimulate learning;	•	lessons where children's understanding is developed through active, practical and first hand experiences, involving individual and collaborative talk, exploration, questioning, prediction and investigation, so that the lesson makes a difference;
•	support for the learning of pupils with differing abilities;	•	developmental feedback and constructive criticism of pupil's work; and where pupils have chance to respond to marking	•	lessons with a purpose and enjoyment for learning.

We base our teaching on our knowledge of the children's level of attainment. Our prime focus is to develop further their knowledge and skills. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability. When planning work for children with special educational needs (SEN) we give due regard to information and targets contained in the children's pencil cases. We have high expectations of all children, and believe that all children should be included in the full range of educational opportunities and that their work here at Thackley School should be of the highest possible standard.

All teachers work to establish positive working relationships with the children that they are teaching. We treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All teachers follow the school policy with regard to discipline and classroom management. We praise and reward children for good effort and, by so doing, help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. We insist on good order and behaviour at all times. When children misbehave we follow the guidelines for sanctions as outlined in our school Behaviour Policy.

Teaching Assistants and HLTA's are deployed in a variety of ways. Sometimes they work with individual children and sometimes they work with small groups or the whole class. Support staff are also fully involved in the delivery of support programmes such as Rapid Phonics and intervention reading programmes.

All teachers reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and plan their professional development needs accordingly. We do all we can to support teachers in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice.

### **Display**

The school believes that the purpose of display is to support pupil's learning and is paramount in supporting this process.

The classroom environment and displays play a key role in:

## Engaging pupils in learning – ownership by the pupils

• Interactive display	• Exciting ideas
• Asking questions	• Fresh / relevant to current topics & themes
• Challenging	• Colourful
Criteria for success	Working/ learning walls
Using VCOP	Targets

## Enabling learning to take place

• Word lists	• White boards and pens
• Connections between lessons	• Access to basic resources by pupils (crayons, scissors, paper, glue, etc.)
• Number lines	• Number squares
• Timelines	• Tables squares
• Clocks	• High-frequency words
• Place value cards available	• Spelling patterns

## Keeping what is learnt in mind

• Key ideas	• Learning Intentions /Success Criteria
• Word lists	• Flip charts
• Connectives between subjects and Learning	• Mind maps, links

## Celebrating success

• Displaying good work (also in corridors)	• Exemplar materials
• house points, achievements	• Pupil's photos (check permission)

## Raising expectations

• Setting targets	• Aims
• Success Criteria	• Class/group targets (literacy/numeracy)
• Agreed class rules	• Steps to Success

## Clarifying routines

• Timetables	• Visual activity cues
• Access to resources labelled	• Signs

## Encouraging independence

• Self-registration charts	• Word banks, dictionaries, thesaurus
• Access to resources	• Class responsibilities, rotas, monitors
• Strategies for self-help	

## Inclusive classrooms

• Multi-cultural content (not only relating to RE)	• Access
• Gender role models	• Pupil ownership
• Named work by all pupils	

## TARGET SETTINGS

Targets are set in English and Mathematics for individuals and groups of children in Years 1 to 6. Literacy targets are based on writing assessments and are discussed with children. Maths targets are based on the work to be studied each term and are shared with children. Targets are discussed with parents at parents' evenings, are written into children's pencil cases and are written into children's planners.

## PLANNING

### Long term planning

English and Maths are always taught to discrete year groups to ensure progression but are also integrated by theme of topic where possible.

### Medium term planning

Plans for every half term or term for the topic, are identified in planning folders and follows the Clive Davis Learning Challenge Curriculum. This is adapted by teachers.

## ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

Assessment exists to help the teacher to help the child. It ensures more effective teaching by providing the evidence for closer matching of tasks to the child's needs. It assists the children by providing them with an indication of what stage they have reached in the learning process and their next steps. It helps to identify future planning and teaching strategies. It also helps us to recognise and move on from success.

## Assessment for learning....

• Is part of effective planning	• Affects learner motivation
• Focuses on how students learn	• Promotes commitment to learning intentions and success criteria
• Is central to classroom practice	• Helps learners know how to improve
• Is a key professional skill	• Encourages self-assessment
• Has an emotional impact by promoting self-esteem	• Recognises progress from child's previous best

## We use these strategies to link assessment to better teaching and learning:

• Evaluation of planning informs next steps	• Writing books: used every half-term from Year R to show children's progress
• Use of data from formal assessment to inform planning and setting	• Assessment tasks, e.g. writing, numeracy, science: results used to inform future planning
• Improvement time: children are given back work with suggestions as to how part of it might be improved, then allowed 5 minutes planned improvement time	• Assessments strategies within lessons to assess the level of learning and next steps

## ROLE OF GOVERNORS

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

• Support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;	• Monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment
• Ensure that the school buildings and premises are effective in supporting successful teaching and learning;	• Ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching;
• Monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations	• Monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning policies through the school self-review processes. These include the headteacher's reports to governors and the work of the teaching and learning and the pupil support committees.

## **ROLE OF PARENTS**

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping their children to learn. We work hard to inform and support parents in how they can help further their children's learning and confidence at school. Parents' consultation meetings with teachers are held to discuss progress and strategies for further improvement.

The school sends information to parents at the start of the school year about the programmes each child will be following in Literacy, Numeracy and in the Foundation subjects (in Foundation Stage information about Early Learning goals). Information about homework expectations is also sent at this time so that parents know what will be given to children each week.

As children begin at Thackley they follow our induction process which gradually introduces the child to their new teacher and class and to the sort of experiences they will be having in Reception class. Parents are provided with important information and meet with senior staff and the headteacher, as well as their child's class teacher. Parents can share any concerns they may have. They also receive information about helping their child with early literacy and numeracy skills.

Parents receive a detailed school report in July. This outlines the child's achievements during the year, how they are achieving relative to expected levels and how they can improve and develop in the future. Parents may discuss any concerns they have with teachers.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that children attend school regularly. Parents are asked to inform the school of any absence on the first day (telephone answer phone available) so that we know that they are safe at home.

Many parents offer some of their time to help in school. These offers are always welcome and parents undertake a variety of tasks, working with individuals and groups of all ages. All school helpers are required to undertake a DBS clearance before starting work.

## **ENGLISH**

At Thackley our English curriculum revolves around a text that is linked to our integrated curriculum. It teaches of basic skills to enable all children to read fluently, write imaginatively and neatly in a grammatically correct manner, spell correctly and develop good speaking and listening skills. We approach the teaching of reading through a variety of means. Our practice involves using a variety of schemes to widen each child's sight vocabulary, phonetical knowledge and love of books.

From an early age the children are taught phonics, and word building skills. Opportunities are also given to increase their vocabulary by borrowing a variety of books available in school. Across school, parents are strongly encouraged to assist with their child's reading, and guidance is given by the teacher in a reading diary sent home. The older children are taught to develop wider reading competency through topic research and library reference skills.

Writing ability is promoted by providing opportunities for self expression, as well as by teaching specific grammatical text, spelling techniques and correct letter formation and handwriting skills. Children are introduced to many forms of literature and poetry and are encouraged to develop speaking and listening skills through discussion, debate and drama.

## **MATHS**

The work in Mathematics is based wholly on the philosophy and expectations of the National Curriculum. Each child is assessed continuously against a progressive series of objectives and their future work is dependent upon their achieving the appropriate level of understanding that these require. It is an established principle that no child should move on to a higher level in any area of Mathematics if they do not possess the various skills and levels of understanding that this will require of them.

During the foundation stage much of the work involves practical tasks, games and activities to build an understanding that Mathematics is involved with real things and part of the real world. Children count by counting objects, manipulate numbers by dealing with objects and, as they are ready, begin to understand that numbers can be used to represent the group of objects. Sequences and patterns and an understanding of shape and position all start in similar ways.

As children progress through the school they will be given more demanding challenges according to their level of ability. To further this development the children are organised into sets for Mathematics from Year 2 onwards. Those who are more able to work independently and who show ability to develop their skills more quickly are generally put into a larger set. This allows a smaller set to be organised to offer closer support for those who need that little extra time from their teacher or from a support assistant. The philosophy is to provide as much support as possible for those who need it most, whilst giving independence and freedom to explore and to meet higher challenges to those who are ready for this. The progress of the children and the arrangement of the sets is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

Although assessment is a constant part of the process from the earliest stages, from Year 2 onwards there is a nationally accepted series of formal and annual assessments which are used to provide evidence of the children's levels of achievement. These assessments are used at Thackley and provide much valuable information about how children are progressing. The results of these assessments are, of course, shared with parents at these times.

We are always keen that children are encouraged at home to develop their skills and any efforts made to encourage and develop these areas in particular will be of great benefit to your child's progress. Mathematics is also one of the areas in which children will be expected to carry out regular homework tasks and again parental support and encouragement with the completion of these tasks will be very beneficial.

At Thackley we continually strive to develop the quality of our teaching and learning. In light of this, this policy will be reviewed every three years taking into consideration research and developments into the quality of teaching and learning.

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