



St. Michael's C. E. Primary School

Teaching & Learning  
Policy

[Approved: Autumn 2015]

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# Teaching and Learning Policy

[see also Gifted & Talented; SEN; Equal Opportunities]

## 1 Introduction

1.1 At St. Michael's School we believe in the concept of lifelong learning, and in 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; in short, 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.

## 2 Aims

2.1 We believe that people learn best in different ways. At our school we provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows all children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential.

2.2 Through our teaching we aim to:

- enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners;
- foster children's self-esteem, and help them to build positive relationships with other people;
- develop children's self-respect, encourage them to understand the ideas, attitudes and values of others, and teach them to respect other people's feelings;
- show respect for a diverse range of 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 it;
- help children grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens.
- use the child's preferred learning style whenever possible.

## 3 Effective learning

3.1 Research tells us a lot about how to maximise learning. We know that people learn in many different ways, and respond best to different types of input (visual, auditory and kinaesthetic); we must therefore deliver teaching in different ways to address the needs of all our learners. We take into account the different forms of intelligence (for example, mathematical/logical, visual/spatial, interpersonal, musical) when planning our teaching and use the September inset days to share this knowledge.

3.2 We ensure the best possible environment for learning by developing a positive atmosphere where pupils feel safe and feel they belong, where they enjoy being challenged, but where they enjoy learning, and know that they will succeed (because they know the challenge will have been set at the right level). We therefore play music to accompany learning, provide 'brain breaks' at various points in the lesson to refocus children's attention, and make sure that the children have access to drinking water and fruit snacks. We have purposefully kept afternoon breaks to ensure VAC. We also use careful timetabling i.e. sport on Monday afternoons to encourage high morale.

3.3 Concerning the structure of a lesson, learning-theory tells us:

- to connect the learning with previous work;
- to give learners the 'big picture' of the whole lesson;
- to explain the learning objectives, and why the lesson is important;
- to present the information in a range of styles;
- to allow opportunities for the pupils to build up their own understanding through various activities;
- to review what has been learnt, and so increase recollection;
- to provide feedback, celebrating success and reviewing learning strategies;
- to outline the next step in the learning before moving on.

**3.4** We offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways. These include:

- investigation and problem-solving;
- research and discovery;
- group work;
- pair work;
- independent work;
- whole-class work;
- asking and answering questions;
- use of ICT;
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest;
- creative activities;
- watching television and responding to musical or tape-recorded material;
- debates, role-plays and oral presentations;
- designing and making things;
- participation in athletic or physical activity.

**3.5** 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.

## **4 Effective teaching**

**4.1** When we are teaching we focus on motivating all the children, and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, so that they reach the highest level of personal achievement.

**4.2** Teachers make ongoing assessments of each child's progress, and they use this information when planning their lessons. It enables them to take into account the abilities of all their children. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge and skills of all our children. 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, we give due regard to their specific needs. Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for children with disabilities. We value each child as a unique individual, and teachers are familiar with the relevant equal opportunities legislation covering race, gender and disability. We will strive to meet the needs of all our children, and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements related to matters of inclusion.

**4.3** We set maths targets for the children in each year, and we share these targets with children and their parents. We review the progress of each child at the end of the academic year, and set revised targets.

**4.4** We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives. We take these objectives from the National Curriculum or the national literacy or numeracy strategies or Early Years

Foundation Stage. Our lesson plans contain information about the tasks to be set, grouping and the way we assess the children's work. We evaluate all lessons, so that we can modify and improve our future teaching.

- 4.5** Each of our teachers makes a special effort to establish good working relationships with all the children in the class. We treat the children with kindness and respect. We recognise that they are all individuals with different needs, but we treat them fairly, and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All our teachers follow the school policy with regard to discipline and classroom management. We set and agree with children the class code of conduct, and we expect all children to comply with the rules that we jointly devise to promote the best learning opportunities for all. We praise children for their efforts and, by so doing, we 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 policy on behaviour.
- 4.6** We try to ensure that all tasks and activities that the children perform are safe. When we plan to take children out of school, we follow a strict set of procedures to ensure safety: the venue is visited, risk assessments are completed, and various permissions are obtained. We inform parents, and obtain their permission, before the visit takes place.
- 4.7** We deploy teaching assistants and other adult helpers as effectively as possible. 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.
- 4.8** Our classrooms are attractive learning environments. We change displays at least once a term, so 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. All classrooms have a range of dictionaries and of both fiction and non-fiction books, as well as displays relating to literacy and numeracy. We also use displays as learning prompts for the children. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and that an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources, which results in high-quality work by the children.
- 4.9** All our teachers reflect on their strengths and weaknesses, and plan their professional development accordingly. We do all we can to support our teachers in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice.
- 4.10** We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all.

## **5 The role of governors**

- 5.1** Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school's approach to teaching and learning. In particular they:
- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
  - ensure that the school buildings and premises are used optimally to support teaching and learning;
  - check teaching methods in the light of health and safety regulations;
  - seek to ensure that our staff development and our performance management both promote good quality teaching;
  - monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning approaches through the school's self-review processes, which include reports from subject leaders, the

half-termly Headteacher's report to governors, and a review of the in-service training sessions attended by staff.

## **6 The role of parents**

**6.1** We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We do all we can to inform parents about what and how their children are learning:

- by holding parents' evenings and Learning Support Services to explain our school strategies for literacy, numeracy and health education;
- by using Learning Support Services to report to parents and 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, and suggesting, for example, regular shared reading with very young children, and support for older children with their projects and investigative work.

**6.2** We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We would therefore like parents:

- to ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible;
- to ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and PE kit;
- to do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school;
- to inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour;
- to promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general;
- to fulfil the homework requirements set out in the home-school agreement.

## **7 Monitoring and review**

**7.1** We are aware of the need to monitor the school's teaching and learning policy, and to review it regularly, so that we can take account of new initiatives and research, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school. We will therefore review this policy every two years, or earlier if necessary.

**Signed:**

**Date:**