

St Peter's RC Primary School Learning and Teaching Policy

September 2019



This document is a statement of the aims, objectives and strategies for Learning and Teaching at St. Peter's School. *This policy was drawn up and agreed by all teaching staff at St Peter's Primary School. It will be reviewed within the next two years.*



Article 28 Children and young people have the right to an education.

This learning and teaching policy is based on our school aims.

We aim to **welcome, value and respect the rights of everyone** by

- Welcoming and supporting pupils, staff, students and volunteers who join our school.
- Developing working relationships underpinned by respect, courtesy and kindness.
- Respecting learners and valuing their thinking.
- Valuing and celebrating pupils' positive attitudes, success and achievements.
- Prioritising clear and accurate communications between school and home.

We aim to help children to **enjoy learning in ways that match their needs, challenging all to do and be their best** by

- Planning interesting learning activities to motivate pupils and encourage their interaction with new ideas and information.
- Sharing the learning intentions with learners and giving positive feedback and praise.
- Recognising the potential of all learners and using a variety of teaching approaches to meet the varying needs of individual learners.
- Deploying a variety of assessment strategies to improve the quality of the pupils' learning and to monitor their progress
- Differentiating activities by task, expectations or amount of support given.
- Managing classroom activities to facilitate different learning styles.
- Timetabling Pupil Support Assistants to support the pupils and classes with greatest need.
- Encouraging children to ask questions and giving them opportunities to regularly evaluate their work and their approach to learning.
- Encouraging organisational, curricular, classroom and individual flexibility, innovation and creativity.
- Requiring pupils to engage actively with ideas and materials, giving plenty of opportunities to practise newly acquired skills.
- Providing a range of effective well-organised teaching and learning materials.
- Selecting appropriate teaching strategies from a wide repertoire to engage pupils.
- Accessing modern technology and digital resources via our interactive whiteboards and portable suite of laptop PCs, Chromebooks and ipads.

We **aim to look after our health and care for the world** by

- Taking every opportunity to develop informed attitudes, knowledge, understanding and skills which help pupils to live healthy lives and recognise interdependency in our world.
- Promoting partnership and collaboration between pupils, parents and staff.
- Developing links with Active Schools, health professionals and groups in the wider community that support health and environmental work. .
- Establishing Health and EcoCommittees comprising pupils, parents and staff.
- Encouraging and supporting the Committees to plan presentations and events that inform and involve the whole school community in health-promoting events and environmental awareness.
- Participating in Health Promoting and EcoSchools Award schemes and competitions.
- Annually updating our Health Promoting Charter and EcoCode.
- Running annual Health Weeks and Eco Action Days.

We aim to ***create a happy, supportive and inclusive school community which nurtures everyone*** by

- Providing a calm, quiet environment that is conducive to learning at all times, in which each child can achieve his or her maximum potential.
- Ensuring each classroom is an attractive place in which to learn.
- Sharing the responsibility for maintaining good relationships and agreeing classroom rules which are displayed in each room.
- Providing a fair and disciplined environment.
- Supporting children with additional needs by accepting and valuing diversity and difference.
- Taking care to ensure that resources reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of our society, and that all pupils have equality of access.

We ***aim to overcome obstacles together, helping and seeking help*** by

- Treating problems as opportunities to learn.
- Recognising that we learn from mistakes.
- Recognising and using support and expertise within our own staff to share best practice.
- Assessing the needs of all children and sourcing appropriate professional help and learning materials for those with additional needs.

We ***aim to mirror the Gospel values of trust, respect, tolerance, honesty, generosity and forgiveness in all that we attempt*** by.

- Choosing texts, digital resources and projects that reflect the Gospel values and provide opportunities to discuss their practical applications.
- Working closely with the Scottish Catholic Education Commission and other agencies (such as Grampian Racial Equality Commission and the Scottish Catholic International Aid Foundation) that promote these values.
- Questioning sensitively, in order to provide opportunities for pupils to clarify their own ideas as they think aloud.
- Nurturing our learners and establishing an ethos where members of the class stimulate and support one another's learning.

We ***aim to excel by behaving kindly and achieving high academic standards*** by.

- Cultivating an ethos of achievement and having high but realistic expectations of learners.
- Retaining well-qualified staff and accessing high quality professional development for them.
- Maintaining purposeful and informative planning, record-keeping and assessment documents.
- Building a Curriculum that engages pupils in meaningful experiences to meet the outcomes of a Curriculum for Excellence.

Learning

Each child is unique and learns in a particular way. We organise opportunities for pupils to develop their own strategies to gain knowledge and skills in:

- Investigation
- Experimentation
- Listening
- Observation
- Talking and discussion
- Asking questions
- Practical exploration and role play
- Retrieving information
- Imagining
- Applying their knowledge and skills in new contexts
- Problem-solving
- Making choices
- Making informed decisions and explaining them.

Learning can involve uncertainty and difficulty as new skills are acquired, knowledge is integrated and problems are solved individually and in groups. The social aspect of learning collaboratively provides support as it encourages talking and thinking. Pupils with low self-confidence can “pair and share” to try out ideas in a safe context.

Teaching

In St Peter's School, teachers:

- Ensure that there are clear introductions and conclusions to lessons.
- Have appropriately high expectations of what all children can achieve.
- Share learning outcomes with pupils and set clear goals.
- Are aware of different learning styles.
- Can observe, identify and employ methods to support different learning styles.
- Give due consideration to what children bring to the learning situation and plan programmes accordingly.
- Have a good knowledge of the curriculum and use a range of different activities, including digital resources, which can be adapted to the differing needs of learners.
- Recognise the need to track and assess individual children diagnostically.
- Use a range of teaching styles within programmes.
- Support children in taking responsibility for their own learning.
- Recognise effort as well as ability.
- Set homework that consolidates classroom learning.

Pupils are grouped by ability for reading, aspects of writing and maths in order to meet their learning needs. Activities set for the groups support and challenge pupils to progress at an appropriate pace and acquire skills to learn more independently. In all other curricular areas, pupils have the benefits of working with others who may be more or less able than themselves.

All teachers understand and practise differentiation in a meaningful way, providing different tasks or different amounts of support in recognition that children differ in:

- Their level of concentration and ability to complete activities in a block of time
- Their ability to learn collaboratively
- Their ability to learn independently
- Their listening skills
- Their thinking skills
- Their presentation skills
- The amount of homework they can do and the amount of support they have for their homework

Homework

The development of study skills in the home environment helps to encourage responsibility for learning. Homework provides an opportunity for children to share their learning with their parents. A variety of tasks that complement classroom learning are set by class teachers. At the early stages, the focus is on developing reading skills and parents are expected to hear their children read aloud each day. As the children gain confidence and independence, more written tasks are set for the children to reflect on their reading or develop their spelling and writing skills. Tasks may also include consolidation of maths concepts and project research. Further information is available in our Homework Policy which is reviewed annually.

The Curriculum

We continually review and refresh our curriculum in line with the *Curriculum for Excellence*. We promote active learning strategies to enable all pupils to develop their capacities as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. We help children to link different areas of learning and we develop inter-disciplinary learning.

Experiences and activities are planned to enable pupils to be challenged and supported in their learning at their own particular level. Children are assessed formally and informally using Assessment for Learning strategies that identify success criteria and next steps in learning.

Balance, progression and continuity throughout the curriculum are achieved by forward planning and evaluation at every stage. Teachers are responsible for planning the learning and teaching activities for their own class. Collaborative planning is encouraged and liaison is essential with all visiting specialist teachers, the Additional Support for Learning teacher and the English as an Additional Language teachers. There are twenty-five hours

of learning time each week. Teachers are with their classes for 22.5 hours. They liaise with the teachers who cover their classes during their non-class contact time but are not responsible for detailed planning of those sessions.

Teachers follow the agreed curriculum policies with reference to whole school planning to ensure the principles of curriculum design are taken into account:

- progression
- coherence
- relevance
- breadth and depth of learning
- personalisation and choice
- challenge and enjoyment

Teachers' planning is flexible enough to respond to pupils' interests while ensuring that each stage builds upon earlier knowledge and achievements, providing breadth and coherence

Classroom Management and Organisation

Learning spaces include classrooms, the gym hall, the library, the environmental garden, other areas of the school grounds and the wider environment which is explored in field trips. Learning and teaching may be structured in any or all of these ways:

- *Whole class teaching followed by individual follow-up learning activities*
- *Group work, organised according to appropriate criteria (i.e. Ability, mixed ability, interest etc)*
- *One to one teaching*
- *Conferencing*
- *Collaborative learning in pairs or groups*
- *Independent learning*

In general, whole class teaching sessions should be interspersed with individual, paired or group work so that pupils are not required to sit silently listening for extended periods. In general, pupils' attention may start to wander after one minute for each year of their age and teachers should be mindful of this when planning lessons.

Teachers encourage pupils to work at a good pace, challenging them to extend and apply their learning. They will facilitate the effective use of time through:

- The provision of appropriate resources
- Planning extension activities for individuals or groups of pupils.

Resources

Classrooms are organised to facilitate learning and the development of independence. This requires flexibility in the organisation of furniture. Each classroom is equipped with a basic set of resources and books appropriate to the age range. Staff are encouraged to suggest suitable resources. Specialist resources are stored in designated areas of the school. Staff inform the headteacher of shortages and consumables are replenished as necessary.

- *The resources in each classroom are grouped according to curriculum subject and clearly labelled.*
- *Each class has concrete maths apparatus and a range of games to encourage active numeracy and literacy.*
- *Pupils and staff label resources to enable independent access.*
- *Writing resources are available for use at all times. Materials are readily accessible to pupils who are encouraged to develop responsibility for them.*
- *'Activity/play' areas are attractive and adequately resourced. They change regularly in order to give opportunities for a range of play and role-play that contribute to purposeful learning.*
- *Each class has a comfortable and attractive Library corner. The stock is rotated to maintain interest and relevance to project work.*
- *Wherever possible, labels and posters reflect the language diversity in the school.*
- *Pupils are involved in the maintenance and care of all equipment and resources.*
- *Pupils are taught how to use all resources correctly and safely, with due regard for Health and Safety and waste.*

Planning

The agreed Forward Planning documents are completed at the beginning of each term and are submitted to the Headteacher. Paper copies of all Planning Masters are available from the Headteacher. Electronic copies of planning documents are available on the Google Teamdrive.

Teachers are responsible for completing the daily planner which must be available at all times on the teacher's desk. All teachers who are responsible for pupils' learning during any part of the day must record the activities, evaluation and any assessment information in the daily planner.

The Headteacher and Depute Headteacher convene weekly stage meetings to discuss Learning and Teaching and there is an Open Door policy to talk about resources, progression, assessment or any aspect of learning and teaching.

Assessment and Record-keeping

Assessment is an integral part of learning and teaching. Pupils are fully involved in assessment for learning, recognising success and identifying next steps. Targets are set to extend knowledge and understanding and develop skills.

There is continuous assessment of each pupil's progress throughout the session, using a wide variety of assessment procedures – observation, discussion, questioning, oral and written activities. Staff gather sufficient evidence that a child has achieved the success criteria for each Level in class.

The regular assessments establish the level of attainment and inform future planning. Records are kept by class teachers and the headteacher. They are summarised to pass on to the next teacher. CfE levels in literacy and numeracy are recorded in SEEMIS and form part of the annual written reports to parents.

Pupils in P1, P4 and P7 complete Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSAs) in numeracy and literacy.

Tracking Pupils' Progress

The pace of pupils' learning is closely monitored and predictions are made by class teachers about when pupils will have shown secure understanding and knowledge in aspects of maths, reading and writing. Pupils are assessed to confirm teacher judgments about attainment.

The headteacher meets the class teacher and Support for Learning Teacher to put support in place for those pupils who are not making the anticipated progress. Individualised Educational Plans (IEPs) are drawn up for some pupils who need significant support and these plans are regularly reviewed with staff, pupils and parents.

Monitoring and evaluation

Teachers' forward plans, pupils' work and classroom practice are regularly monitored by the headteacher and depute headteacher. Discussions are held about identified aspects of learning and teaching each term.

This policy will be reviewed in September 2021.