



Overdale Junior School**Teaching and Learning Policy****To be used in conjunction with the Assessment for Learning Policy****August 2016**

1. Introduction

Teaching and learning are at the heart of all that we do at Overdale Junior School. We aim to develop a love for learning within a creative curriculum where every individual is valued for their unique contributions. We wish to provide pupils with the knowledge and skills needed to become critical thinkers, ready to embrace local and global challenges. Learning in our school is a collaborative process between adults and children; between school and home. Assessment for learning lies at the heart of this process.

The aim of Overdale Junior School's Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy is to make explicit the shared and agreed principles and practices upon which teaching, learning and assessment are based at our school across all areas of learning.

2. Our Vision and Aims

In our school we ...

- develop every child's full potential and strive for the achievements of high standards;
- provide a safe, welcoming environment where everyone feels valued;
- nurture the personal, social and spiritual development of individuals into caring and responsible people;
- encourage good behaviour and attitudes to learning within a framework of mutual trust and respect;
- promote independence, encouraging children to take responsibility for their learning and behaviour;
- promote strong links between school, home and community;
- play a full and developing role in the local and extended community;
- inspire everyone to develop intellectually, physically and creatively;
- ensure that all children have equal access to broad, relevant and stimulating teaching and learning opportunities;
- have challenging but realistic expectations of each child;
- develop open and enquiring minds;
- work hard to underpin all our work with 'Every Child Matters' principles.

3. Effective Teaching and Learning

At Overdale Junior School we recognise that learning is a continuous process that involves acquiring knowledge, skills and concepts, and developing positive and worthwhile attitudes. We strive for Quality First Teaching at all times to promote active learning.

Quality First Teaching:

- helps children to recognise and value their achievements and successes;
- builds on what learners already know;
- builds secure foundations for subsequent learning;
- makes learning exciting and real;
- makes learning an enjoyable, yet challenging experience;
- develops the full range of learning skills across the curriculum;

- actively involves children in their learning.

Effective teaching and learning takes place in an environment where:

- relationships provide a confident and positive atmosphere;
- it is stimulating, purposeful and where children's work is valued and displayed appropriately;
- a culture of self-evaluation prevails;
- there is room for reflection;
- learning is valued;
- there is mutual respect between all members of the school learning community;
- no-one is afraid of making mistakes;
- lessons are well-paced; teachers vary pace to match the task and children's needs (20% teacher/ 80% child);
- support from home is encouraged.

Teachers and other adults at Overdale Junior School:

- actively promote independent learning
- encourage children to be responsible for their own learning, their environment, themselves and others around them
- ensure learning objectives address the needs of all children
- ensure the behaviour of all children allows learning to take place
- equip children with the ability to transfer knowledge and skills
- have the flexibility to embrace and explore unexpected responses without losing sight of the intended learning outcome
- are not afraid to go beyond the objective, to better respond to children's learning
- make explicit reference to the learning that is taking place
- recognise that children learn in different ways (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic) as well as learning differences (SEN, BSED etc)
- set learning in a meaningful context and exploit links between subjects and the wider world
- use skilful questioning
- have high expectations

4. Planning (See OJS Curriculum document)

Long term planning and curriculum framework

Our planning ensures effective, efficient and creative delivery of the National Curriculum. Long term plans have been designed to encompass a range of subjects and the development of skills. Teachers work in year group partnerships to produce half termly or termly plans for their year groups (The OJS 'Theme Web'). Each term these are shared with parents via our school website. Subject progression is mapped throughout the school. Our Skills Progression Grids (Chris Quiqley) support both planning and assessment processes.

Our plans ensure:

- knowledge, skills and concepts are developed systematically from year to year;
- best use is made of links between subjects;
- effective links enable children to apply the knowledge and skills learnt in one subject to others;
- there is a greater coherence to learning by the bringing together of complementary aspects of subjects in a thematic approach;
- links between subjects are relevant and not contrived.

We recognise that some aspects of the National Curriculum have to be taught discretely, outside of the linked curriculum map.

Medium and short term planning

Our medium term plans set out the work to be covered in one half term or term. These have been developed from a variety of sources including:

- Chris Quigley, "Planning a Skills Based Curriculum";
- PSHE programme;
- Catherine Cheater SOW for French;
- Music Express;
- Relevant intervention programmes;

Short term plans set out work to be covered in a week or lesson and are based upon prior assessment. Where a detailed medium term plan has been written, short term plans may be brief in outline.

Effective short term planning at OJS is completed using our Accelerated Learning Model (Weekly planning proforma) which:

- ensures plans have clear, skill based learning objectives;
- Includes success criteria that clearly outlines the steps to success (how to achieve the LO);
- recognises the range of needs and abilities within the class and that these are differentiated accordingly;
- takes into account IEPs (EHC), PEPs (LAC);
- takes into account a range of teaching styles to reflect children's different learning styles;
- takes into account previous learning;
- plans in assessment activities including self, peer, teacher and TA;
- are evaluated and adapted in light of daily pupil achievement;
- identifies opportunities to embed ICT;
- identifies related homework activities;
- highlights resources required.

Teachers differentiate the curriculum by:

- task;
- resources;
- outcome;
- adult support.

5. Sharing Learning Objectives and Success Criteria

The sharing of learning objectives is a crucial element in the process of teaching and learning. By sharing the objective, we empower children to take ownership of their learning.

We ensure:

- learning objectives are clear, skill based and explained in words children understand;
- children understand the purpose of their learning ('The Big Picture');
- a clear success criteria outlines 'how' children can show/work towards meeting the LO;
- task plans/steps to success are separate from success criteria;
- learning objectives and success criteria are visually displayed where appropriate and referred to, except in those lessons where they are to be 'discovered';
- learning objectives provide the focus for the teacher to evaluate to what extent the lesson met its aims;
- learning objectives provide the focus for self/peer evaluation (and marking).

Learning objectives often begin with:

- To know (knowledge: factual information).
- To be able to (skills: using knowledge and resources).
- To understand (concepts: understanding reasons, causes and effects, how things work).
- To be aware of (attitude: empathy, awareness of issues).

The purpose of the **success criteria** is to outline 'how' children can achieve the learning objective. If the learning objective is seen as the 'house', then the steps to success are the 'bricks' used to build the house.

Steps to success are often phrased:

- 'What I am/you are looking for is' (WILF)
- 'How will I/you know you have....'
- 'What will I/you see....'
- 'I/you will know you have been successful if....'
- 'Remember to....'
- 'Can you....'
- 'Top tips....'
- 'By the end of the lesson you will be able to ...'

Success criteria are shared, discussed and agreed with pupils. They are appropriately differentiated to ensure all pupils can make progress towards the learning objective. Success criteria are used as a basis for the evaluation of the lesson by the teacher and children. This forms part of key questioning and plenaries.

Task plans, or 'steps to success' outline how to complete an element of the lesson or task and can be viewed as a set of instructions. These are separate and in addition to success criteria and can be used for whole class teaching or to support individuals with learning differences.

6. Effective Questioning

We recognise that skilful and well-planned questions are crucial to effective teaching, learning and assessment. Questioning is at the heart of our creative curriculum, with our 'OJS theme webs' developed using Blooms Taxonomy. Key questions linked to a National Curriculum objective are developed and build throughout a topic in order to develop a child's higher level thinking skills. Blooms hierarchy of thinking is developed as follows, encouraging children to respond to questions that require them to:

- Remember
- Understand
- Apply
- Analyse
- Evaluate
- Create

Our questions focus children's thinking on the key points. Teachers and other adults model good questioning to help and encourage children to ask their own questions and to further or clarify their learning and understanding. Effective questions can help to move children from the concrete and factual towards the analytical and evaluative.

Questions can help children to:

- consolidate their learning;
- explore ideas further;
- make connections;
- create new understandings;
- make links to the 'big picture';
- reflect on their learning;
- think.

There are two main types of questions:

1. **closed questions:** these imply that the teacher has a predetermined 'correct' answer in mind, and are a useful means of making on the spot assessments;
2. **open questions:** allow for a range of answers and can encourage children to think beyond the literal.

It is important that we support children in responding to questions:

- allowing 'thinking-time' after each question ensures children have time to think through their response;
- giving children the opportunity to discuss their ideas briefly with another child or adult ('talk partners' or 'talk trios') can help them to rehearse their responses, and to feel more confident and prepared - we encourage children to 'think, pair, share';
- by teachers using a range of signs or signals to gather children's responses (snow balling, washing lines, thinking continuums);
- by encouraging children to provide evidence for their views or opinions;
- using pre-tutoring when appropriate to familiarise children with lesson content and providing those with learning differences to 'rehearse' responses before sharing;
- children are taught how to respond to other children's replies sensitively in order to build consensus or to expose a range of opinions or possible viewpoints.

Effective questions are those that:

- start with a narrow focus and broaden out; recall first, then encourage fresh thinking; or
- start with a broad focus and narrow down to detail;
- signal that participation is valued;
- stimulate and sustain continuing interest in a topic;
- help children externalise and 'rehearse' their knowledge by putting it into words;
- are differentiated, targeting children of all abilities; engaging all children in the learning;
- allow children time to think, reflect and gather their ideas before answering;
- are varied in style;
- encourage children to take risks; exploring and sharing their ideas in a non-threatening way.

7. Assessment

Assessment can take many forms and can be used for different purposes. It is embedded in our teaching and learning cycle and is an essential part of this. Effective assessment for learning happens all the time in the classroom and involves:

- promoting trusting relationships;
- valuing attitudes to learning;
- encouraging and building self-esteem;
- sharing learning objectives with children;

- helping children know and recognise the stage they are working at and that which they are aiming for;
- providing feedback that helps children to identify how to improve - recognising their next steps and how to take them;
- believing that every child can improve in comparison with previous achievement;
- both teachers and children reviewing and reflecting on performance and progress (Assertive Mentoring);
- children learning self-assessment techniques to discover areas they need to improve upon.

We acknowledge that there are two main types of assessment which fulfil important yet differing roles.

1. **Formative assessment** – assessment *for* learning – is an active and ongoing process in the classroom between the teacher and the child. It is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers in order to decide where the learners are in their learning journey, where they need to go and how best to get there. We recognise that the following areas are all part of assessment for learning:
 - clarifying learning objectives – at the planning stage
 - sharing learning objectives with pupils when teaching
 - involving children in self-evaluation against the learning objectives pupils are aware of the success criteria used to judge their learning outcomes
 - focusing oral and written feedback around the learning objectives of the lesson
 - using appropriate questioning during the lesson
 - raising children's self esteem through the use of positive language and through the celebration of achievement (See behaviour policy)
 - using data to effectively gauge the progress of individuals and groups and to inform target setting (children need copies of these and they need to be visible in class, parents also have access to assessment information in the form of termly target cards)
 - organising target setting so that children's achievement is based on prior attainment as well as aiming for the next level up.

One of the key elements in formative assessment is the written or oral feedback which teachers give the children about their work. (See marking policy)

2. **Summative assessment** – assessment *of* learning – is the means by which the progress of children is monitored. This includes end of unit tests and teacher assessments, optional tests as well as statutory end of key stage assessments. Our annual assessment calendar ensures a range of this type of assessment is carried out throughout the year. Target Tracker allows us to interrogate data and make appropriate responses.

Peer and self-assessment

We recognise that children will achieve more if they are fully engaged with their own learning process. We encourage children to actively assess their own learning, determining for themselves whenever possible what they need to learn and why. Time is built in for pupils to reflect upon their own work and set targets. Children are involved in the discussion and agreement of targets and next steps. They are guided within reflection/assessment sessions to evaluate their progress towards a learning objective using the success criteria.

Children are encouraged to ask themselves the following questions:

- Am I learning in the best way for me?
 - What are my strengths and weaknesses?
 - What do I need to do to improve?
 - How am I going to make an improvement?
 - What is really making me think?
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- How will I know if my work is good?

- Do I know what to do if I am stuck?
- Can I identify what I have to learn?
- What can I remember and understand?

The following strategies might be used for peer and self-assessment:

- Traffic Lights
 - Red – I don't understand
 - Amber/Orange – I'm nearly there
 - Green - I understand
- Thumbs up / thumbs down

This is used at any point during a lesson to ascertain understanding or feelings. A useful bank of assessment strategies for use within lessons has been compiled for staff use in the Teaching and Learning area on staff shared network.

- At times, children may indicate their understanding with a coloured dot on their work.
- Talk/Response Partners
 - Children share with a partner:
 - something new they have learnt
 - what they found easy/difficult
 - something they would like to learn in the future
 - what has been done well
 - what needs to be done to improve

8. Marking and Feedback Strategies (refer to Marking Policy)

We interpret the concept of 'marking' in terms of the feedback we give to children about their work. This feedback may take a number of forms - oral, written, formal and informal – and may be given on a group-basis as well as an individual one. In order to assist our children to achieve their full potential in all areas of the curriculum, we believe that 'marking' must be positive, clear and appropriate to the purpose, productive in its outcomes and child centred. Marking work provides us with a vehicle by which we can understand and evaluate each child's developmental needs. We see it as a celebration of the child's own achievements as well as a method of guidance in order to identify areas for development. We consider 'marking' to be an integral part of our classroom practice. It plays a fundamental role in our teaching and learning cycle.

We believe that 'marking' should focus on the learning objective or a personal target which has been identified and shared with the child. Children need to be aware of what has to be learnt so the feedback given is directed and relevant.

Marking Statement

The principles behind our marking policy are as follows:

- Marking should be fair and consistently applied by all staff, including newly appointed members to the team, support staff and supply staff.
- A range of marking strategies should be used including peer and self assessment.
- Opportunities should be provided for children to respond to marking.
- Learning objectives should be clearly identified and displayed so that specific feedback can take place. These objectives should be presented in language appropriate to the age of the children.

9. Target Setting

In addition to the end of key stage targets which are formally set and reviewed in the Autumn term, we set targets as part of our ongoing school monitoring and evaluation cycle.

These may include:

1. **Numerical targets** in reading, writing and maths for every child in each cohort, set and reviewed each year. These targets are monitored throughout the year to check children are 'on track'. Cohort Pupil Progress Meetings take place with the Head teacher termly to discuss targets and progress.
2. **Curriculum targets** for the whole school in English (Writing, Reading, SPG) and maths. Curricular targets are set and reviewed twice a year based on prior attainment. They are informed and identified by analysis of pupils' work, discussions with pupils, teacher assessment and test performance. Planning is adjusted accordingly to meet these targets. There are strong links between curricular targets and the School Development Plan and Performance Management targets.
3. **Short-term targets** set as part of the marking/feedback process. A range of age appropriate systems are used to record and review individual targets, including Individual Target sheets.
4. **Individual targets** are shared with parents at consultation meetings.

We are aware of the need to keep the target setting process both manageable and constructive for both children and teachers. We acknowledge that it is an integral part of our practice and supports, encourages and challenges pupils. We encourage children to take increasing responsibility for targets and to judge their own progress towards achieving them, thus driving their learning.

10. Tracking and Monitoring

Assessment is used throughout the school to track pupil progress from one year to the next. Target Tracker is used to monitor the progress of different cohorts year on year in line with National Expectations and monitor progress in line with previous attainment at key points, e.g. end of Key Stage 1.

These systems enable us to:

- track pupils' progress towards expected or targeted attainment;
- identify pupils who are falling below their expected attainment in order to modify their learning and enable them to get back on track and consider their SEN status;
- identify pupils who are exceeding their expected attainment in order to adjust the curriculum, to meet their needs or revise their targets to ensure access to the mastery curriculum;
- identify if there is variation in the performance of different groups of pupils, e.g. gender differences, ethnicity, looked after children, etc.;
- identify variations in performance in different subjects.

11. Reporting to Parents

Parents are invited to attend consultation meetings in the Autumn and Spring terms at which staff discuss progress and targets for individual children. In the Summer term parents receive a written report on their child's progress during the academic year. This includes targets for improvement. Year 6 parents receive their child's National Curriculum end of key stage assessments. There is also an opportunity for parents to discuss this report with the class teacher should they wish.

12. Monitoring of Teaching and Learning / Self-Evaluation

We have an ongoing, whole school approach to the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning. Our 'Monitoring Calendar' sets out a timetable for when each subject/teaching and learning focus (planning, marking, differentiation etc) is monitored over the course of each year. The focus for monitoring is also derived from identified school priorities in the SDP and draws on the following:

- direct observation of teaching;
- Learning walks and lesson 'drop ins'
- scrutiny of pupils' work;
- scrutiny of planning;
- teachers' self-evaluation;
- discussion with staff;
- discussion with children;
- discussion with stakeholders;
- analysis of assessment results and ongoing data snapshots;
- analysis of evidence from IEPs / Provision Mapping / PEPs and impact of interventions;
- targets set at performance management;
- governor visits and their reports;
- triangulation of several of the above.

Staff are provided with individual feedback based on monitoring visits in order to generate targets for CPD. Triangulation leads to whole school targets for improvement which are shared during staff meetings.

The key aim of this monitoring is to learn from good practice. It helps us to identify our strengths, recognise when improvements need to be made and inform us of the next steps to move forward.

Evidence from monitoring feeds into:

- School Development Plan
- School Self-Evaluation discussions
- School termly Monitoring & Evaluation Reports
- Raising Attainment Plan
- Subject Action Plans
- CPD Planning
- Classroom observations
- Performance Management
- Reports to the Governing Body
- School Improvement Partner discussions

The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is carried out at all levels within the school from the Strategic and Leadership Teams to subject leaders and class teachers, as well as members of the Governing Body.

13. Inclusion/Every Child Matters

We aim to be a fully inclusive school community and to involve all members of the school community in decision-making and policy development. We regard staff, parents and children as undertaking a joint enterprise to make learning exciting and positive for everyone: we are all members of a team working co-operatively to this end. Our aim is to provide the best possible learning experiences for all; this includes giving necessary support to individuals or groups of pupils who require something extra to meet their needs. We aim to encompass the 'Every Child Matters' principles in all that we do, promoting development in all elements of the child's personal, academic, social, emotional and physical wellbeing.

14. Conclusion

This policy for Teaching, Learning and Assessment reflects the consensus of the whole teaching staff, and has the full agreement of the Governing Body. The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all the teaching staff and the Headteacher. Teachers are to make all teaching assistants, supply teachers, pupils and parent helpers within the classroom aware of this policy.