

# St Stephen's CE Primary School



## Teaching and Learning Policy

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*'For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.'* Ephesians 2 v 10

***Ephesians 2:10***



Updated September 22

## St Stephen's CE Primary School

### Teaching & Learning Policy

At St Stephen's CE Primary School we are committed to high quality teaching and learning to raise standards of achievement for all children. All teachers and governors have been consulted in developing this policy, which summarises expectations and common working practices. It reflects what has been agreed in terms of approach and consistency and makes explicit the best practice to which the school aspires. It also reflects the intent and values of our distinctive and unique Christian school.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our subject intent, implement and impact statements.

#### **PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING**

Learning is the purpose of the whole school and is a shared commitment. At St Stephen's we recognise that education involves children, parents, staff, governors, the church, the community and the local authority, and that for optimum benefit all should work closely together to support the process of learning. Working in partnership, we aim to:

- provide a supportive, positive, healthy, caring and safe environment, which has high expectations and values all members of the school community;
- recognise the needs and aspirations of all individuals and provide opportunities for all pupils to make the best possible progress and attain the highest personal achievements;
- ensure children can develop as literate, numerate and technologically competent individuals, within a broad, balanced, exciting and challenging curriculum;
- provide rich and varied contexts and experiences for pupils to acquire, develop and apply a broad range of knowledge, skills and understanding;
- provide a curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, physical, mental and emotional development of the pupils;
- develop individuals with lively, enquiring minds, good thinking skills, self-respect, self-discipline and positive attitudes;
- encourage all children to be enthusiastic and committed learners, promoting their self-esteem, self-worth and emotional well-being;
- develop children's confidence and capacity to learn and work independently and collaboratively;
- develop enduring values of respect, honesty, equality, integrity, tolerance, fairness and trust;
- encourage children to respond positively to the opportunities, challenges and responsibilities of a rapidly changing world;
- encourage children to value the diversity in our society and the environment in which they live;
- encourage children to become active and responsible citizens, contributing positively to the community and society.

#### **Ethos**

The ethos and atmosphere underpin the agreed aims of the school – "the St Stephen's Way". In the course of their daily work the staff will contribute to the development of this ethos through:

- providing a calm and effective working environment, in which each child can produce their best work;
- providing a welcoming environment, in which courtesy, kindness and respect are fostered;
- providing positive role models;
- providing a fair and disciplined environment, in line with the school's behaviour policy;
- effective management of their professional time;
- developing links with all stakeholders and the wider community;
- valuing and celebrating pupils' success and achievements;
- reviewing personal and professional development in order to ensure a high level of professional expertise.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Teaching and Learning is a shared responsibility and all members of the school community have an important part to play.

All members of the school community should work towards the school's aims by:

- nurturing children as individuals and respecting their rights, values and beliefs;
- fostering and promoting good relationships and a sense of belonging to the school community;
- providing a well ordered environment in which all are fully aware of behavioural expectations;
- offering equal opportunities in all aspects of school life and recognising the importance of different cultures;
- encouraging, praising and positively reinforcing good relationships, behaviours and work;
- working as a team, supporting and encouraging one another.

Teachers will endeavour to:

- provide a challenging and stimulating curriculum designed to encourage all children to reach the highest standard of achievement;
- recognise and be aware of the needs of each individual child according to ability and aptitude;
- ensure that learning is progressive and continuous;
- be good role models, punctual, well prepared and organised;
- keep up-to-date with educational issues;
- provide clear information on school procedures and pupil progress;
- have a positive attitude to change and the development of their own expertise;
- establish links with the local community to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life;
- work collaboratively with all involved in education to develop a shared philosophy and commonality of practice.

Parents and carers are encouraged to support their child's learning by:

- ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, well-rested and in good health;
- ensuring that their child arrives at school wearing the correct uniform and bringing necessary equipment;
- providing support for the discipline within the school and for the teacher's role;
- supporting the work of educational targets and becoming actively involved in the implementation of any support programme;
- participating in discussions concerning their child's progress and attainment;
- ensuring early contact with school to discuss matters which affect a child's happiness, progress and behaviour;
- support the school's homework policy and give due importance to any homework;
- allowing their child to become increasingly independent as they progress throughout the school;

Pupils are encouraged to support the school's aims by:

- attending school in good health, maintained by adequate diet, exercise and sleep;
- attending school regularly and punctually;
- being organised, bringing necessary equipment, taking letters home promptly, etc;
- conducting themselves in an orderly manner in line with the expected behaviour policy;
- taking increased responsibility for their own learning through meta-cognitive strategies which are taught throughout school at age-appropriate levels.

The community is invited to support the school by:

- contributing to activities, such as worship, specialist outings, clubs, etc;
- presenting themselves as positive role models to be emulated;
- organising activities and events throughout the year to extend and deepen pupils' knowledge and skills;
- supporting school events;
- voluntarily helping in the classroom.

## Planning

At St Stephen's Community Primary School we are committed to following the programmes of study as required by the National Curriculum 2014. A cycle of National Curriculum Programmes of Study is drawn up by staff and is carefully balanced to ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum, PSHE and RE. A two year cycle is covered in KS1, LKS2 and UKS2 to ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum. Regular staff meetings are used to discuss and develop different aspects of our school curriculum (driven by feedback from monitoring and the school development plan). Previous learning is recalled and recapped through regular retrieval practice which may take place in a variety of low stake ways through quizzes, informal discussions, partner talk etc. Class teachers plan sequential lessons which build on prior knowledge ensuring that both disciplinary and substantive knowledge are developed.

Plans are based upon previous assessment data, pupil need and subject expectation. Curriculum time can be planned as continuous study throughout the term, or as blocks of study.

Subject leaders have a variety of roles. These include:

- taking the lead in policy development and the production of schemes of work designed to ensure progression and continuity in their subject throughout the school;
- supporting colleagues in their development and implementation of the scheme of work, and in assessment and record-keeping activities;
- monitoring progress in their subjects through pupil book study and advising the Headteacher on action needed;
- taking responsibility for the purchase and organisation of resources for their subjects;
- using release time to monitor teaching and learning and to support colleagues;
- keeping up-to-date through reading and attending relevant courses.

Teachers ensure breadth and balance to the curriculum and endeavour to make use of cross curricular opportunities to enhance learning.

Cross phase continuity is ensured by:

- pre-school liaison meetings;
- cross-phase liaison meetings;
- in-school liaison meetings between staff;
- liaison meetings between Year 6 teachers and those from prospective secondary schools;
- visits to secondary schools by Year 6 pupils;
- transfer of pupil records of progress and summative assessment results.

## Organisation

The learning environment will be managed in such a way as to facilitate different styles of learning.

Opportunities will be made for:

- whole class teaching;
- group work, organised according to appropriate criteria (i.e. ability, mixed ability, friendship, etc);
- one to one teaching;
- collaborative learning in pairs or groups;
- independent learning.

All areas of the learning environment will be planned for, including, where appropriate, the outside areas, in order to ensure opportunities for a range of practical activities, which will develop appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding.

The classroom will be organised to facilitate learning and the development of independence. For example:

- resources in each area will be grouped according to curriculum subject;
- book corners will be comfortable and attractive;
- labels and posters should be used wherever possible/appropriate to reflect the language diversity in the school;
- areas for imaginative play will change regularly, in order to give opportunities for a range of play and role-play which will contribute to learning in a purposeful manner;
- pupils will be involved in the maintenance and care of all equipment and resources.

Classrooms provide a stimulating and purposeful learning environment, including thought provoking and stimulating displays.

Classroom support is available from Teaching Assistants. The class teacher plans activities to support learning and teaching assistants support that learning. Volunteer helpers may assist with the many aspects of school life, including supporting reading and providing assistance with school visits. Students are welcomed into school to allow them to complete the ITT programme.

Excellence is celebrated in display and performance. Displays value the learning explored in classrooms and working walls are used to reinforce the key knowledge and vocabulary taught each week. Sustained effort, including drafting and reworking, is encouraged to enhance standards. School events such as performances and assemblies are seen as opportunities for all pupils to demonstrate their own best performance. Pupils are encouraged to believe that any exhibited work (performance or display) should represent their highest standards of personal achievement. Awards are given weekly to celebrate individual academic or behavioural achievement.

## Access for all

So that we always have the highest possible expectations of individual learners and so they can demonstrate what they can do, understand and achieve, teachers will differentiate the curriculum according to individual needs by:

- pace;
- content;
- task;
- relevance;
- resources;
- extension;
- autonomy;
- outcome;
- teacher/adult support.

Learning is adapted for SEND pupils and we offer the full range of curriculum subjects to all pupils. Learning objectives may differ for individuals who are new to the country or have an EHCP, according to their individual needs and the advices from specialist teachers. This is so that they can quickly access learning as their reading skills develop.

EAL and SEND pupils will receive additional support to acquire the necessary vocabulary and use technology to aid their learning. This may be done in pre-taught sessions. Tools for translation and images with main language may be given to scaffold tasks. Widgit is a key resource used in school and offers translation with images so that pupils can access learning quickly. New arrivals are assessed as quickly as possible and the “Race into English” materials as well as the phonics bug materials are used to enable the children to acquire the necessary language for early communication and a quick development of reading.

## Homework

Homework is considered to be a valuable element of the learning process. (See Homework Policy)

We believe that homework should be set:

- to involve parents in their children’s learning;
- to help parents keep abreast of what their child can and cannot do;
- to take advantage of the home context to apply learning;
- to encourage children to talk about their work to their parents and explain what they are doing and how;
- to extend the time for learning, thus enabling children to practise and consolidate their skills and knowledge and strategies;
- to prepare children for secondary school experiences of homework;
- to view learning as a lifelong process and not just restricted to school hours.

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The school’s agreed practice for homework is that:

- homework is set on a regular basis, for all years, in line with our homework policy;
- homework will generally follow on from work which has taken place in class but may take many different forms, including reading, learning multiplication facts and spellings. It should not entail new ideas that require explanation from a teacher;
- homework may sometimes consist of preparation for work yet to be done;
- children should understand exactly what they are expected to do, how to do it, and how long it should take;
- homework should sometimes involve the participation of the parents;

## Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Regular assessments are made of pupils’ work in order to establish the level of attainment and to inform future planning. Formative assessment is used to guide the progress of individual pupils. It involves identifying each child’s progress in each area of the curriculum, determining what each child has learned and what therefore should be the next stage in his/her learning.

Formal summative assessment is carried out at the end of each National Curriculum Key Stage (i.e. in Years 2 and 6) through the use of SATs and teacher assessment. Phonics are tested in Year 1 and re-tested where necessary in Year 2. A multiplication check takes place in Year 4. Optional tests are also taken in Years 1, 3, 4 and 5 in the summer

term. Initial assessment is used in Reception/Early Years within six weeks of starting school and Early Learning

Goals are reported on at the end of the year.

Suitable tasks for assessment include:

- pupil observations
- group discussions;

- short tests in which pupils write answers;
- specific assignments for individual pupils;
- discussions in which children are encouraged to appraise their own work and progress;
- SATs.

Feedback to pupils and time offered for them to improve their work is achieved through discussion and marking of work. We aim to do as much of this in the classroom so that feedback is immediate. Support staff also feedback to pupils. We aim to use feedback:

- To help children to understand how to improve and to ensure comments are positive and constructive;
- In the classroom through circulation of adults
- sensitively and with discretion so that a child can assimilate a limited number of corrections at one time. This will vary according to the age, ability and task.

At St Stephen's we recognise the importance of formative assessment and the important role it has to play in creating a learning culture. Formative assessment carries with it the expectation that, when properly motivated and appropriately taught, all learners can reach a level of achievement which may currently appear beyond them. It provides a breadth of proven life-long learning skills based on an understanding of how we learn rather than what we ought to be learning. This includes:

- creating a positive learning environment;
- focusing all feedback on specific performance improvements which can be acted on;
- sharing an overview of content, process and benefits of the learning to come;
- engaging learners by posing problems and challenging thinking;
- providing opportunities for learners to meet the challenge in a variety of pairings and with multiple ways of representing their understanding;
- creating space for reflection and meaningful dialogue;
- reviewing what has been learned, how it was learned and how it will be used.

Records of progress kept for each child are:

- updated termly by teachers;
- examined by class teachers at the start of each academic year as they prepare for a new class;
- retained throughout the child's time at the school and appropriate records passed on to other schools when pupils leave.

Pupil progress meetings take place once a term where intervention strategies are reviewed and the progress of pupils celebrated. These meetings help the assessment leader to track progress and to offer advice to teachers about ways to intervene further for those pupils who are behind.

Reporting to parents is done twice a year through consultations and through a brief written report in the Spring followed by a more detailed written report.

Results of individual pupils' assessments are made available to parents and carers and discussions take place at parents' evenings as to the evidence used to make judgements.

## Monitoring and Evaluation (Pupil Book Study)

Pupils' work will be monitored and moderated termly in each of the core curriculum areas by the subject leaders. Foundation subjects will also be monitored through pupil book study which revolves around a discussion (with specific focus e.g. vocabulary, feedback, lesson structure) with pupils about their learning. Walkthrough

observations take place in different subjects, again with a specific focus ( e.g modelling, use of manipulatives, support for SEND etc). Staff CPD takes place weekly for both teachers and TAs. This is based on improving teaching and learning through areas identified on the school development plan. Staff have a yearly appraisal, alongside a mid year review, where they are able to celebrate achievements through the year, set personal targets for development and identify any CPD needs.

## Teaching Strategies and Styles

In order to ensure equality of access and effective matching of tasks to needs, teachers will employ a variety of teaching strategies in any one session. Activities should show a balance in terms of individual, group and whole class work. Specialist teaching is available from subject leaders when they can be released from class and also in the form of visitors and sports coaches

The emphasis of our policy is on a good variety of experiences and we encourage children increasingly to take an active role in their own learning. Thus:

- investigative work is used;
- children are encouraged to communicate findings in a variety of ways;
- opportunities are provided for children to become involved in decision making and to take responsibility, along with staff, for their own learning.

At St Stephen's we recognise the importance of key skills. We prioritise reading and ensure that pupils are able to access additional reading and phonics intervention where necessary. Opportunities will be made available across the curriculum to develop:

- Literacy skills
- application of number;
- communication;
- computing skills
- problem solving;
- working with others;
- improving own learning and performance.

Thinking skills will also be developed across the curriculum. This will include:

- creative thinking;
- enquiry;
- information processing;
- reasoning;
- evaluation.

### Enrichment

At St Stephen's Primary School the use of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum is valued and these are used throughout the school to widen children's experiences and support learning across a range of subject areas. We value the contribution that our church and local community makes in enhancing our curriculum offer to all children

### Impact

Through our carefully planned, sequential curriculum we feel that children leave school equipped to continue with their educational journey. Their spiritual needs are met alongside their academic ones and this means that they become reflective of their own actions. Through our metacognition strategies which are taught from entering school, they develop into independence and are enthused and excited to learn.

Policy written by R Devitt Sept 2022

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