



# FLORENCE MELLY COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL



## TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

RATIFIED: JANUARY 2017  
REVIEW: JANUARY 2018

## **Teaching and Learning Policy**

**January 2017**

The purpose of this policy is to raise the quality of teaching and learning in our school. This policy sets out the expectations for our stakeholders and illustrates how we will ensure this happens at our school.

### **1. Our Expectations:**

At Florence Melly Community Primary, we expect that our teachers and other staff:

- (1) **meet the teaching standards (teaching staff only),**
- (2) meet the recommendations set out in the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) Guidance Report '**Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants**' (TAs only),
- (3) have consistently **high expectations** of what each pupil can achieve, including **able and disadvantaged pupils,**
- (4) have a secure understanding of the age related expectations for the age group they are working with and have relevant subject knowledge that is applied effectively to their planning and teaching,
- (5) ensure that assessment information is gathered from looking at **what pupils already know, understand and can do,** and is informed by their parents/previous providers as appropriate in the early years,
- (6) **use assessment information to plan appropriate teaching and learning strategies,** including to identify pupils who are falling behind in their learning or who need additional support, enabling pupils to make good progress and achieve well,
- (7) ensure that our **pupils understand what to do to improve** as a result of useful feedback, written or oral,
- (8) **engage with parents, carers** and employers to ensure they understand how children and learners are doing in relation to the standards expected and what they need to do to improve, including homework,
- (9) ensure that **equality of opportunity** and **recognition of diversity** are promoted through teaching and learning,
- (10) **promote English, mathematics and the communication skills** necessary to function as an economically active member of British society.

### **How we ensure our expectations are met:**

#### **2. Teaching and Learning Development**

"Every teacher can improve, not because they are not good enough, but because they can be even better" (Dylan William).

Outstanding teaching and learning doesn't happen by accident; it is the result of a complex combination of creative flair, thorough planning, effective assessment and feedback, stimulating environments, effective relationships and challenge. We believe that all children, regardless of their ability, should receive high quality teaching and learning throughout the curriculum so they can achieve their maximum potential. High quality teaching and learning is at the heart of everything we do at Florence Melly Community Primary School; for our pupils and our staff.

- (1) Staff are provided with **monthly teaching and learning bulletins** which identify ideas and opportunities to trial innovative approaches in their classrooms. This is a simple way to ensure that our staff are up to date with current teaching and learning initiatives and pedagogical practices. These are collated and displayed on a designated teaching and learning area in school/staffroom.

- (2) Teachers and other staff are encouraged to access **the professional development library** located in the staffroom. A range of texts are available to borrow. These are often recommended by staff and promoted through the fortnightly e-bulletin (Quick Book Look section).
- (3) The SLT identify **lead teachers in each key stage** who drive standards of teaching and learning in their own classroom and across their phase. These teachers act as positive role models, mentors, coaches and ambassadors for high quality teaching and learning in our school.
- (4) At the beginning of every staff meeting/briefing a member of staff **presents a 'tip of the week'** or 'golden nugget'. This is often linked to the teaching and learning bulletin. E.g. try an enquiry question at the start of the lesson or follow these AFL steps to ensure it is embedded in your classroom.
- (5) Teachers and other staff have access to a shared **digital platform to 'drop' resources**. Staff are encouraged to add resources they have found effective in their own classes.
- (6) Staff have access to a **WhatsApp teaching and learning group**. This social media platform provides the opportunity for teaching and learning professional discussion. Staff are sent and share reminders, tips, and articles etc.
- (7) **NQTs, RQTs and new staff to the school have access to a buddy system** to enhance their professional development. The designated mentor organises support packages which include a number of sessions with the teaching & learning lead, the SENCO etc. This initiative is available for as long as staff require support. Middle leaders can also identify staff who would benefit from the support through our monitoring cycle. Those staff are encouraged to access the support.
- (8) **Middle leaders**, particularly those completing professional qualifications such as the NPQML, are asked to **complete research projects** with a teaching and learning aspect relevant to the current school development plan. These projects always feed into the school development plan and help develop an area of school improvement beyond their classrooms.
- (9) Teachers and other staff are encouraged to complete their own research projects. E.g. a group of staff working on improving feedback in school. These staff meet half termly to discuss the findings. The projects must come out of a need for the school and are included in the school development plan.
- (10) The information and resources issued during external CPD training courses are disseminated to the appropriate members of staff. Those attendees present an overview of the training to staff during staff meeting time. The resource materials are 'dropped' into the digital platform and often form part of the fortnightly e-bulletin.
- (11) **We empower our TAs. Our HLTAs line manage our TAs and lead workshops to enhance their professional development.** A tailored TA programme, to compliment what our teaching staff are doing, is provided. Our TAs often work separately to our teaching staff on INSET days on their tailored programme of CPD.
- (12) Teachers are encouraged to observe each other teaching and learning, in a supportive capacity, and provide peer to peer support, advice and coaching. We call this 'critical coaching'.
- (13) We have a '**learning from each other**' culture. Teachers are encouraged to ask themselves: What can you add to your toolkit? At the implementation stage, the SLT reiterate that what the teachers are trialling needs to be seen 'raw'. This is led by middle leaders initially and is supportive not judgemental. At a later date, an evaluative judgement is conducted by the SLT.

**Where teachers performance is identified by the appraiser as serious concern; the Headteacher will act in accordance with the School Staffing Regulations 2009 which requires the Governing Body to have procedures for dealing with any lack of Capability of their Employees. This is linked with the Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 which came into force 1st September 2012.**

### **3. Learning Environment**

A large amount of a child's time is spent sitting in a school classroom. A classroom is a place where they will learn the various skills deemed necessary and proper for them to achieve success in the global society. The classroom is where they will gain an understanding of their place in the world and the gifts that they have to offer it. It is where the children develop what they want their future to look like, as well as knowledge of the skills needed to reach that goal. At Florence Melly Community Primary School, we view the classroom as a vital place in the growth of our children. We believe that if schools really do play a large role in teaching the next generation how to be successful members of society then every precaution should be taken to make sure that the learning environment is one that helps students thrive.

If not approached correctly, a classroom can be set up in a way that stifles creativity or does not promote a positive learning environment. There are many things that can affect this environment. There are physical elements such as wall art, arrangement of desks, or resources. Also, there are intangible elements such as the energy of the classroom, the rules, or the sounds within the room. Each of these can impact a student's focus and achievement in the class.

- (1) Our learning environments **offer support for all learners and are inclusive** e.g. they must contain visual timetables.
- (2) Pupils are encouraged to, and do frequently, use supportive resources in the classroom, independently of the class teacher.
- (3) Examples of the steps of pupils learning are displayed on **working walls** and other pupils are encouraged to use these examples to support their own learning.
- (4) Teachers encourage the **effective use of new technologies** by pupils to aid their learning.
- (5) Our TAs are deployed effectively throughout lessons. TAs work with all ability groups.

For additional information and guidance about how we structure and promote effective learning environments, please see our separate 'Display Policy' (2016).

### **4. Learning Outside the Classroom**

At Florence Melly, we recognise and value the impact that learning outside of the classroom has on the overall education of our pupils. We endeavour to ensure that every child has access to a range of academic, creative, musical and physical activities beyond what is taught in the classroom. We develop programmes that meet the needs of all pupils, including those with learning and physical disabilities and provide enjoyable experiences, where positive attitudes of teamwork and co-operation, competition and tolerance may develop.

#### **Extra-Curricular**

- (1) **We consult with our pupils and offer clubs that they want.** Pupil voice is highly valued at Florence Melly Community Primary. The clubs we offer often build on talents our pupils already have or help to develop new talents. Our extra-curricular clubs aim to provide new opportunities for our pupils.
- (2) **We organise clubs which target groups of children.** For example, we offer; an after-school more-able writing club and a chess club where the more-able mathematics. In both cases, the more-able Pupil Premium children are given priority.
- (3) **We offer a variety of clubs for our younger children.** These are more often delivered lunchtimes by our TAs. These clubs target both specific children, areas identified for improvement in our school development plan and areas of interest suggested through pupil voice.
- (4) **We offer excellent residential trips for Years 2 and 6.** These residential trips get the best value both socially and academically and are focussed on building skills such as teamwork, self-esteem and confidence as well as having clear links to the curriculum.

## Homework

- (5) **Our minimum requirement for homework is that it is set weekly.** In many year groups, particularly in upper KS2, homework is set more frequently.
- (6) Spellings and times-table tasks are set as homework weekly in every year group.
- (7) We set homework which is balanced between **consolidation** and **open-ended enquiry tasks**.
- (8) Homework tasks are completed in a homework book. Every child in our school has a homework book and the proforma used to set homework is the same from nursery to Year 6.
- (9) Our homework books act as both a record of homework completed and an evidence base for the objectives set out in the national curriculum programmes of study. We encourage our staff to collate evidence for making assessment judgements from a wide variety of sources, including homework.
- (10) **Additional, online homework** is set through programmes such as Lexia and Mathletics and our pupils in KS2 are encouraged to complete homework on their class blogs. Pupil Premium children are prioritised when offering online homework.

## Interventions

- (11) **Our staff offer two types of intervention - short and medium term.**
- (12) **Short term interventions** focus on those children who **struggle to grasp particular concepts taught in class throughout the week.** They are informed by formative assessment strategies used in class. These interventions focus on reading, writing and maths support. **Teachers complete a weekly intervention provision plan** which are issued at the beginning of the week and are handed in to the Assessment Lead on a Friday afternoon. The short term interventions focus on quick gains. They address immediate issues and gaps in learning identified by the teachers from what has been taught during the week. Our Learning Mentor and Pastoral Care Officer also complete a weekly intervention provision plan but **the focus of their plan is on emotional, social and behavioural support.** Teachers are encouraged to liaise with the Learning Mentor and Pastoral Care Officer when they feel support is required to enable children to ultimately fulfil their social and academic potential.
- (13) **Medium term interventions** are offered to children who have been identified as 'target pupils' by the Assessment Lead at baseline. These pupils are discussed at a formative pupil progress review at the beginning of the year. Interventions for these pupils take place over a longer period of time and are informed by both formative and summative data. Class and cohort interventions are logged on a whole-school provision map proforma.
- (14) The Assessment Lead collates the provision maps and creates a picture of what is being offered above and beyond the curriculum across the school. This process is updated half-termly and the impact of the interventions are evaluated during half-termly pupil progress reviews conducted by the Headteacher and Assessment Lead with teachers.

## Healthy Lifestyles

- (15) We actively promote healthy lifestyles and encourage our children to participate in activities such as; school allotment and cookery club.
- (16) We offer frequent 'Deep Learning Days' - whole school days devoted to improving aspects of healthy lifestyles e.g. healthy schools, walking to school, multi-sports etc.
- (17) We assess pupil attitudes to healthy lifestyles e.g. choices they make for school dinners and participation in extra-curricular activities.

## 5. **Assessment and Feedback for Learning**

At Florence Melly Community Primary School, we strongly believe that assessment involves both teachers and learners using information to improve learning. It is more than marking and feeding back grades to students. It involves identifying the next steps for learning as well as having a clear understanding of the errors students make and the difficulties they experience. As well as assessing progress and analysing responses, we recognise that it is vital that feeding back the outcomes of that assessment is done positively and constructively too. Actions to help the learner improve are agreed and teaching methods to meet the learner's identified needs are adapted. This must be done effectively within the lesson if all learners are to make progress!

- (1) Our teachers **offer regular written and verbal formative feedback**, inline with the school's marking and feedback policy, which indicates to our pupils:
  - specific aspects of their work in which they have been successful,
  - errors, misconceptions and how to improve (their next steps in learning),
  - as appropriate, additional challenge to extend and/or reinforce their learning.
- (2) Our teachers use this information to inform their short term planning.
- (3) Teacher feedback comments aim to always be **as specific and directional as possible** so that pupils have a clear understanding of what they have done well and what they could improve upon further before moving on to the next piece of work.
- (4) Where appropriate, **our children will either be given or identify themselves, the criteria to be included in a successful piece of work.**
- (5) Teacher's marking and written comments can also provide information for parents/carers about the progress their child is making and what their strengths and areas for development are in particular subjects.
- (6) **The frequency of marking and feedback is dependent on the need** and we have no fixed rules for our teachers, so long that our pupils are making effective progress and that this is reflected in the children's books.
- (7) **Where possible, feedback is collaborative** and the value of oral feedback and discussions with pupils about what and how they learn is not underestimated.
- (8) **We recognise the effectiveness of instant feedback** and our teachers are encouraged to provide this as a primary method for ensuring effective pupil progress. We feel that this approach allows our pupils to reflect and act immediately on the feedback provided.
- (9) Staff provide **half-termly targets for the pupils** in English and maths. Where possible, these are **negotiated with the children** and link to the appropriate 'Programmes of Study'. These targets are **clearly displayed in the children's exercise books.**
- (10) We provide our staff with **marking boxes** which contain all they need to effectively mark pupils' work as set out in our 'Assessment, Marking and Feedback' Policy.
- (11) Staff are encouraged to attend a **marking club** where staff gather and mark the pupils' books with a cuppa and cake.
- (12) We allow adequate time for our pupils to reflect on, edit and improve their work through **DIRTY (Dedicated, Reflection and Improvement) time.** During this time, our pupils may be required to:
  - correct errors,
  - improve specific aspects of their work which have been specifically identified by the teacher, TA or their peers,
  - add to their original work or use a different strategy,
  - attempt an additional challenge to extend and/or reinforce their learning.
- (13) **Our teachers submit termly summative assessment data** which is analysed by the Assessment Lead and Headteacher as part of our monitoring cycle. This data informs pupil progress reviews which occur half termly (formative) and termly (summative). This process gives the SLT and Governors an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the quality of education in our school. They monitor which individuals or groups of children are making progress and to what degree and offer support, in a variety of ways, to ensure all of our pupils make progress.

- (14) Teachers **moderate and standardise** work frequently in accordance with the schools monitoring cycle. This takes place both internally and externally, as part of the Liverpool Assessment Project and working with schools in our Learning Network.
- (15) The SLT use pupil progress reviews as a vehicle to discuss progress towards performance management targets.

For additional information and guidance please refer to our 'Assessment, Feedback and Marking' Policy (2016).

## **6. Planning**

- (1) Our teachers use formative and summative assessment information to **inform their planning** across the curriculum areas.
- (2) Teachers are encouraged to **plan in a format which is meaningful to them** and the needs of their children.
- (3) **Teacher's planning should be a working document** which changes day by day to reflect the needs of the pupils and match their abilities.
- (4) Evidence of **short-term planning is displayed in each classroom and updated weekly.**
- (5) Long-term planning and curriculum mapping is completed at the beginning of the academic year and identifies cross-curricular opportunities across the curriculum.
- (6) **All planning shows evidence of planning for different groups** e.g. high ability, disadvantaged pupils, SEND pupils etc.

## **7. Pedagogy and Practice**

To promote a consistent, whole-school vocabulary for discussing teaching and learning in our school, we use four main headings; enthuse and engage, challenge, autonomy and feedback. These four heading are used across the school for all aspects of teaching and learning monitoring and evaluation including; learning walks, work scrutinies, lesson observations and performance management.

### **Enthuse and Engage**

Teacher's are encouraged to consider:

- (1) How interested are pupils in the subject matter? Are there a variety of engaging activities? Do activities 'hook' the children? How does this impact on the progress they make? Do the pupils display pride in their work including presentation and handwriting? Do activities link to other areas of the curriculum? E.g. PSHE/British values/whole school theme.

### **Challenge**

Teacher's are encouraged to consider:

- (2) How well is the work set matched to the pupils' abilities? Does the pupils' work demonstrate positive attitudes to challenge (willing to have a go /stick at things)? What is the impact of teacher questioning? Do pupils ask questions about the subject matter to the teacher and through the teacher to other pupils? Does this aid progress? Do pupils have positive attitudes to challenge – does this impact on the progress they make? How effectively does the teacher address pupil misconceptions so that they improve their understanding? Do pupils, on some relevant occasions, get a choice in the level of challenge they want to attempt?

### **Autonomy**

Teacher's are encouraged to consider:

- (3) Can pupils work effectively independently? Can pupils work effectively in pairs or groups independently of the teacher? Do they learn from each other as well as the teacher; for example, using working walls, use of dictionaries/thesaurus; stimulus material, group generation of ideas or peer response. How does this impact on progress? Is homework set? How does it complement class work? What is the quality of homework produced by pupils?

## **Feedback**

Teacher's are encouraged to consider:

- (4) How clearly do pupils understand the criteria they need to consider in order to complete their work successfully? To what extent are they involved in generating these criteria? Are the feedback opportunities planned by the teacher in the lesson timely and well utilised by the majority of pupils? Does it aid the progress they make? Is teacher feedback specific and directive in terms of encouraging the pupil to reflect upon their learning – has this impacted on their learning? How effective is pupil peer and self-assessment in aiding pupil reflection and learning? Do they value and respond positively to feedback? Is there feedback on skills and literacy in foundation subject books. How effectively does the teacher address pupil misconceptions so that pupils improve their understanding?