

WHITEHILLS PRIMARY SCHOOL

"...putting children first...."



Teaching & Learning policy

Date reviewed: **January 2022**

Reviewed by: **N James**

Ratified by *Governors*: January 2022

AIMS OF THE POLICY

This policy, has been created by and agreed upon by the teaching staff and Governing Body. At Whitehills 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 aims and objectives of the school and supports its vision.

As a school, we are committed to our mission statement – ***‘Through hard work, respect and responsibility, everyone in our community will achieve their potential, feel happy, safe and secure and will develop the skills for their future learning journey.’***

The purpose of this policy is to provide an agreed set of standards, consistency of practice and equal opportunities for all learners. The principle of inclusive learning and equality of opportunity are embraced and learning is promoted for each individual learner regardless of their prior experience, ability, gender, age, ethnicity, or any other circumstance.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our subject policies.

PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING

*Learning has been defined in cognitive psychology as **an alteration in long-term memory:** “If nothing has altered in long-term memory nothing has been learned.” Progress, therefore, means knowing more (including knowing how to do more) and remembering more.*

OFSTED 29 Jul 2019

Learning is the purpose of the whole school and is a shared commitment. At Whitehills Primary School we recognise that education involves children, parents, staff, governors, 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, and through our core values of hard work, respect and responsibility, 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.
- Develop children's cultural capital

ETHOS

The ethos and atmosphere underpin the agreed aims of the school. 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 his or her 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;
- Acknowledge that *everyone* is a learner;
- reviewing personal and professional development in order to ensure a high level of professional expertise.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Learning and teaching 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:

- esteeming 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, continuous and builds on prior learning;
- be good role models, punctual, well prepared and organised;
- demonstrate, at all times, our core values of hard work, respect and responsibility;
- 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 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;
- demonstrate, at all times, our core values of hard work, respect and responsibility;
- 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;
- allowing their child to become increasingly independent as they progress throughout the school;
- informing the school of reasons for their child's absence;

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;
- conducting themselves in an orderly manner in line with the expected behaviour policy;
- taking increased responsibility for their own learning;
- demonstrate, at all times, our core values of hard work, respect and responsibility.

The community is invited to support the school by:

- contributing to activities, such as assemblies, 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.

LONG TERM PLANNING

At Whitehills 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, SRE and RE. At Whitehills, we have some subjects such as History which can have a cross curriculum theme (for example World War II in Year 6 linked with writing and geography) However, we are developing our curriculum in foundation subjects to be more discrete to ensure the skills and knowledge required meet National Curriculum expectations. Staff meetings and professional development days are used to allow staff to have the time to complete the development and where possible staff have opportunities to work with external advisors from the Local Authority and other professionals.

Subject overviews are reviewed with all staff yearly to ensure knowledge is built on over time and these plans are shared with parents at the start of each term.

Medium term 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. At Whitehills Primary School, we are committed to raising standards of basic skills. By basic skills, we mean the ability to read, write and speak in English and to use Mathematics at a proficient level to facilitate learning across the curriculum in order for our children to be successful in later life.

Rosenshine (2010, 2012) summarised at least 40 years of research on effective classroom instruction and devised a set of key principles that maximise impact of teaching in the classroom. From these we have developed agreed features of what effective lessons at Whitehills Primary School should include over a sequence of lessons:

1. Connections with previous learning are made by the teacher and pupils, usually at the beginning of the lesson.
2. New learning is presented in small steps, with appropriate periods of pupil practice after each step (including the need to check back with an adult regularly).
3. All adults have high expectations and foster an ethos of self-belief in the pupils.
4. Skilled open questioning promotes thinking and assesses learning of all pupils (with follow up action as necessary to secure learning).
5. When answering questions or solving problems, time is given for rehearsal and reflection and “talk partners” may be used. Children collaborate and teach others through a range of opportunities and thus are able to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding.
6. Scaffolding is used to allow children to be as independent as possible.
7. The lesson is well paced so that pupils are engaged and display positive attitudes to learning.
8. Modelling of knowledge and skills by adults is provided for all learning and, where necessary, for consolidation of new learning.
9. Learning walls are regularly referred to in order to guide and support learning.
10. Pupils engage in regular review of their own learning as well as reviewing and discussing that of others.

The key expectations are:

- Daily review
- Small steps when introducing new learning
- Questioning
- Modelling
- Guided student practice
- Understanding is checked
- Scaffolding
- Independent student practice
- Regular review

Pupils with special educational needs receive support provided by a learning support assistant, 1:1 support which is overseen by the class teacher and the SENco. Extra support is given in the classroom through Quality First Teaching and scaffolding. Additionally, advice is sought from relevant external support agencies when and where the need demands it. (See Special Educational Needs & Inclusion Policy).

Subject leaders have a variety of roles. These include:

- taking the lead in curriculum development 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 and advising the Headteacher on action needed; taking responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central resources for their subjects;
- using release time to support colleagues;
- keeping up-to-date through reading and attending relevant courses.
- Ensuring the governing body have up to date information on subjects
- Talking with confidence about their subject and attainment in their subject

Teachers ensure breadth and balance to the curriculum and endeavour to make use of curricular opportunities to enhance learning and to ensure children have an opportunity to a progressive curriculum.

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:

- book corners will be comfortable and attractive to promote a love of reading
- pupils will be involved in the maintenance and care of all equipment and resources.

Classrooms provide a stimulating and purposeful learning environment, including working walls to support understanding and learning.

Classroom support is available in the form of both learning support assistants and volunteers (when Covid measures allow). These are used at the discretion of the class teacher. Volunteers assist with the many aspects of school life, including supporting reading and providing assistance with school visits. Students are welcomed into school and certain standards of dress and conduct are expected.

Excellence is celebrated in display and performance. Each child is given an opportunity to have work displayed during the school year. 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. 'Worker of the Week' awards are given weekly to celebrate individual academic or behavioural achievement. Children are rewarded when demonstrating any of our Core Values of: hard work, respect or responsibility. Any member of staff, including Amey members (site supervisors) and Kingswood (catering staff) can award tokens to the children ensuring they state why the child has been awarded a token.

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING (AfL)

When AfL is used appropriately children receive personalised learning at its best, and for this reason we see assessment as being fundamental in every lesson.

A range of strategies must be used to ensure effective AfL including, open-ended and differentiated questioning, talk partners, use of mini-whiteboards, guided group work, time for reflection and review using strategies such as thumbs up or down or traffic lights to ascertain understanding (with appropriate action taken quickly to secure learning), self and peer assessment.

If, by the end of the lesson, it is clear the child has not met the learning intention then additional teaching/ intervention to address misconception can be put in before the end of the day or before the next lesson and planning should be adapted for the next lesson.

Regular assessments are made of pupils' work in order to establish the level of attainment and to inform current and 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. Optional tests are also taken in Years 3, 4 and 5. Initial assessment is used in Reception/Early Years within six weeks of starting school and Foundation Stage Profiles are maintained.

Suitable tasks for assessment include:

- 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;
- pupil observations;
- SATs.
- PIRA, (standardised reading assessment) PUMA (standardised maths assessment)

In writing, through our Talk4Writing programme, independent written work (a hot task) is completed regularly to support accurate assessment judgements, after the children have been taught all requirements needed for a specific genre over a period of two –three weeks. In reading, levels are assessed through their ability to work on VIPERS (Vocabulary, inference, prediction, explanation, recall and sequencing) this may be in reading sessions, one to one work, guided reading activities, test outcomes and Talk4Reading activities. In maths, children have daily practice in Years

3-6 where they should be sharpening their arithmetic skills at age related expectations(WhiteRose planning to support this), through opportunities to problem solve (reasoning) and number tasks completed in lessons. From Foundation Stage to Year 2 children are using NCETM maths resources (National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics) to promote the development of early number.

High expectations should be the norm in all lessons and children should not be in static groups. In order to achieve accurate and fair judgements of a pupil's level of attainment, moderation activities are regularly planned into the staff meeting timetable. Cross year group and cross phase moderation also takes place as part of this process of achieving accurate assessment. Foundation Stage 2, Year 2 and Year 6 take part in moderation with other local schools and have been selected to be externally moderated.

MARKING:

Marking is a formal or informal recognition of work in progress or completed. This includes open-ended questioning, dialogue focusing on learning intentions and writing observations and learning targets onto work.

Specific formative comments on pupils' work act as a record as well as being a reminder of the focus for future progress. Marking should be comprehensible to pupils and parents and to this end be consistent and should use words, numbers or pictures.

- helps children understand how to improve and comments aim to be positive and constructive;
- at best this is completed while a task is being carried out through discussion between child and teacher;
- of written work is used 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.

Feedback to pupils about their own progress is achieved through discussion and the marking of work and is most effective during the lessons. At Whitehills Primary School, we believe that 'live' marking within the sessions, are more effective as teachers and support staff can quickly identify if a child has a misconception which can be addressed within a session.

(see marking policy)

All results from assessments are analysed and used to inform future planning. Directed time is allocated to staff to ensure the assessments support planning. Use of the analysis tool with PIRA and PUMA allow staff to ascertain gaps in learning and these are discussed in pupil progress meetings with the Headteacher and Senco after assessments have been completed in November, March and June.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING

Pupils' work will be monitored and moderated regularly in each of the core curriculum areas by the subject leaders and the Deputy or Headteacher. A termly review of monitoring procedures is held with all members of the teaching staff in the form of Pupil Progress Meetings which includes discussions around our whole school Provision Map and the impact of the interventions that are used. Subject leaders will regularly monitor children's books. The Performance Management cycle through Professional Growth Meetings informs learning and teaching. (See Performance Management Policy).

QUALITY FIRST TEACHING & ROSENSHINE'S PRINCIPALS OF INSTRUCTION

At Whitehills Primary School, we believe deploying Quality first teaching (QFT) and utilising the key principals of Rosenshine we will engage and support the learning of all children. The ultimate goal with Quality First Teaching strategies is to ensure that all whole-class teaching is as inclusive as possible. This means that all instruction should come from the teacher and not from additional support, such as teaching assistants and other specialists.

Quality First Teaching demands 100% participation from the pupils, and sets high and realistic challenges. It does not 'spoon feed', it is challenging and demanding; it expects pupils to be able to articulate their ideas, understanding and thinking by actively promoting pupil talk.

As a school we have moved away from differentiating lessons to scaffolding support. Differentiation refers to the idea of modifying instruction to meet a student's individual needs and learning styles. Scaffolding refers to **modifications** you make while designing and teaching lessons that allow all students to be successful in learning the same content which means children are 'keeping up' rather than catching up. Scaffolding involves breaking up the learning into parts so that students can gradually tackle more complex materials independently, whilst still accessing the learning objectives.

The key characteristics of QFT as:

- Highly focused lesson design with sharp objectives
- High demands of pupil involvement and engagement with their learning
- High levels of interaction for all pupils
- Appropriate use of questioning, modelling and explaining on the part of the teacher (linked to Rosenshine)
- An emphasis on learning through dialogue, with regular opportunities for pupils to talk both individually and in groups
- An expectation that pupils will accept responsibility for their own learning and work independently
- No cap on learning
- Fluidity of grouping
- Marking / assessment within or at the end of the session will inform planning
- Regular use of encouragement and authentic praise to engage and motivate pupils

Rosenshine's principals mirror many of the expectations of QFT.

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. This will include:

- discussion and questioning (open and closed as appropriate);
- previewing and reviewing work;
- interactive teaching;
- listening;
- brainstorming;
- providing opportunities for reflection by pupils;
- demonstrating high expectations;
- providing opportunities for repetition/reinforcement;
- build on prior learning
- providing encouragement, positive reinforcement and praise;
- making judgements and responding to individual need;

- intervening, as appropriate, in the learning process in order to encourage development;
- providing all children with opportunities for success;
- using a range of communication strategies – verbal and non-verbal.

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.

Planning will incorporate as many styles of working as possible. These styles include:

- individual learning;
- collaborative learning in small groups, or pairs;
- one to one learning with an adult, or more able pupil;
- whole class;
- independent learning.

Group work may include friendship, matched ability, mixed ability, etc, appropriate to the activity. Collaborative learning is encouraged, although some periods of the day may be set aside for silent work.

“Children are more likely to learn successfully if they have their basic physical needs met, feel unthreatened, secure, safe and valued, have a sense of belonging to the school environment and are engaged, motivated and involved. They can see the relevance of what they are doing and know what outcome is intended. They can link what they are doing to other experiences and understand set tasks. They have the physical space, materials and tools required to fulfil their tasks. Distractions are minimal and groupings allow individual or group work to take place”

Primary Strategy 2004

Teachers at Whitehills Primary School feel that pupils learn best when:

- they are happy, healthy and alert – receptive and positive
- they are interested and involved – learning is relevant and stimulating
- the purpose of a task is understood – they understand why they are doing it
- they feel secure – in terms of environment, relationships and learning
- they feel valued – teachers and other adults care about their development as learners
- they have opportunities to explore and take risks
- they are actively involved, making choices and taking responsibility in their learning
- they have an element of control and can work with independence
- they receive positive feedback and praise for achievements
- the learning environment is well-organised and resources are easily accessed
- tasks are differentiated, matched to the child
- learning is built on existing knowledge and experience – clearly defined small steps
- they have opportunities to talk about their work, reflecting, discussing and sharing ideas
- the teacher is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and motivated

Effective learning is ensured through the process of monitoring successful teaching (see monitoring policy) and pupil’s learning outcome i.e. Baseline Assessment, reading ages and SAT results.

Successful teaching takes account of children's prior learning and must ensure continuity and progression. At Whitehills Primary School, we focus our teaching on the principals of Rosenshine:

Linked to the above, successful teaching is:

- confident – teachers have a clear understanding of subject knowledge and setting objectives
- high expectation – there is optimism about, and high expectation of success
- well planned – scaffolded methods and organisation strategies which match curricular objectives and needs of all pupils
- interactive – pupil's contributions are encouraged, expected, extended
- characterised by high quality oral work
- resources are thought out and of high quality
- well-paced – there is a sense of urgency, driven by the need to make progress and succeed
- informed – by assessment outcomes

Resources

Classroom and central resources are the responsibility of classroom teachers and subject leaders who ensure that:

- there is a range of appropriate, accessible, high quality resources available for which pupils can select materials suitable to the task in hand;
- all children know where classroom resources are kept and the rules about their access and use;
- children are encouraged to act independently in choosing, collecting and returning resources where appropriate;
- the library is a valued resource and used appropriately;
- children work together to establish an attractive, welcoming and well organised environment engendering respect, care and value for all resources.

Each classroom will be equipped with a basic set of resources and books appropriate to the age range. Specialist resources will be stored in the appropriate curriculum resource cupboard/area, and will be regularly audited by the subject leaders. Consumables will be replenished as necessary. Staff may contact subject leaders with suggestions for specialist materials which may need ordering.

Pupils will be taught how to use all resources correctly and safely, with care and respect and with regard for Health and Safety and waste. Care will be taken to ensure that resources reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of our society, and that all pupils have equality of access.

At Whitehills 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.

Time is a resource that we value. To maximise its use:

- as children progress throughout the school they are encouraged to take greater control of their own learning, including their use of time;
- opportunities for learning are maximised by ensuring that tasks are made specific by focused objectives;
- teachers will encourage pupils to work within given time scales, and will facilitate the effective use of time through the provision of appropriate resources and planning extension activities;

- all children engage in useful activities upon entering the classroom and know what to do between the end of an activity and the end of a session.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

- All children should have equal access to subjects in order to develop their personal capabilities.
- When children are working in groups, we endeavour to ensure that their hands on experience is equitable.
- Resources are checked to ensure that gender and ethnicity are reflected in a balanced way without stereotyping.
- The subject leads, in conjunction with the SENCO, will advise teachers on the support that can be provided to children with particular individual needs.

INCLUSION

- Teachers ensure that the work undertaken by children with a disability:
- takes account of their pace of learning and the equipment they use; takes account of the effort and concentration needed in oral work, or when using, for example, vision aids; is adapted or offers alternative activities in those subjects where children are unable to manipulate tools or equipment, or use certain types of materials; allows opportunities for them to take part in educational visits and other activities linked to their studies; uses assessment techniques that reflect their individual needs and abilities.


Reviewed by staff, governors January 2022

THE PRINCIPLES OF INSTRUCTION

TAKEN FROM THE INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF EDUCATION


This poster is from the work of Barak Rosenshine who based these ten principles of instruction and suggested classroom practices on:

- research on how the brain acquires and uses new information
- research on the classroom practices of those teachers whose students show the highest gains
- findings from studies that taught learning strategies to students.




www.how2teach.com

01 DAILY REVIEW




Daily review is an important component of instruction. It helps strengthen the connections of the material learned. Automatic recall frees working memory for problem solving and creativity.

02 NEW MATERIAL IN SMALL STEPS



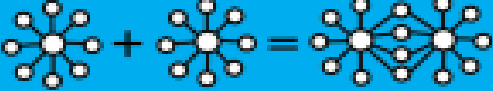
Our working memory is small, only handling a few bits of information at once. Avoid its overload — present new material in small steps and proceed only when first steps are mastered.

03 ASK QUESTIONS




The most successful teachers spend more than half the class time lecturing, demonstrating and asking questions. Questions allow the teacher to determine how well the material is learned.

04 PROVIDE MODELS




Students need cognitive support to help them learn how to solve problems. Modeling, worked examples and teacher thinking out loud help clarify the specific steps involved.

05 GUIDE STUDENT PRACTICE




Students need additional time to rephrase, elaborate and summarize new material in order to store it in their long-term memory. More successful teachers built in more time for this.

06 CHECK STUDENT UNDERSTANDING




Less successful teachers merely ask “Are there any questions?” No questions are are taken to mean no problems. False. By contrast, more successful teachers check on all students.

07 OBTAIN HIGH SUCCESS RATE




A success rate of around 80% has been found to be optimal, showing students are learning and also being challenged. Better teachers taught in small steps followed by practice.

08 SCAFFOLDS FOR DIFFICULT TASKS




Scaffolds are temporary supports to assist learning. They can include modeling, teacher thinking aloud, cue cards and checklists. Scaffolds are part of cognitive apprenticeship.

09 INDEPENDENT PRACTICE



Independent practice produces ‘over-learning’ — a necessary process for new material to be recalled automatically. This ensures no overloading of students’ working memory.

10 WEEKLY & MONTHLY REVIEW



The effort involved in recalling recently-learned material embeds it in long-term memory. And the more this happens, the easier it is to connect new material to such prior knowledge.