Teaching and Learning Policy

Autumn 2013

Introduction

At Cavendish Primary School we believe that carefully planned, purposeful and well directed teaching and learning is essential to achieve continuing school improvement.

Aims

The aims of this policy are to ensure that, through high quality teaching, we enable all our pupils to:

- Achieve their potential;
- Be fully literate and numerate;
- Be confident and competent in their use of technology;
- Have high self esteem and a strong belief in themselves as learners;
- Have a strong sense of physical, emotional and intellectual well-being;
- Have an interest in the creative and expressive arts;
- Have a sense of awe and wonder about the world in which they live;
- Feel safe and secure and have a sense of belonging;
- Have a strong sense of moral values with a tolerance, appreciation and understanding of other cultures, faiths and backgrounds;
- Enjoy being at Cavendish Primary School.

How Children Learn

We know that children learn in a variety of different ways. Understanding of the different strategies children use for learning is important in planning and delivering successful lessons. The following principles all play a part in ensuring effective learning:

- Children experiencing **success** are more likely to succeed at the next task. Effective differentiation must be used to ensure that activities set give each child the opportunity to succeed.
- Children experiencing success are more likely to respond positively to a **challenge** which extends their knowledge, skills and understanding: one which is enjoyable, stimulating and interesting.
- Learning needs to be revisited. Many concepts and skills are returned to and presented differently and / or extended. Frequent practice through **repetition** and **reinforcement** has an important part to play in the mastery of key skills, e.g. tables, spellings, phonics.
- Learning is mastered more easily if it is based on **practical experience** and makes use of as many **senses** as possible.
- Children are better motivated when they are learning in a **structured** and **stimulating** environment.
- Some learning is enhanced by the opportunity to share and discuss ideas with others. **Collaboration** and **cooperation** have an important role.

- Other learning activities are better tackled alone, in a **quiet environment** in which children can **concentrate** and **reflect**.
- Children learn effectively through discovering things for themselves. This is particularly true in science and technology. To be most effective learning through discovery needs to be **well-structured** and **controlled.**
- Children learn through instructions and questioning. A carefully planned **didactic approach** to teaching which involves the whole class is one of the most efficient uses of the teacher's time.
- Children's learning is enhanced by having a **flexible** curriculum that responds to personal experiences and immediate events.
- Children learn more effectively if they feel good about themselves. They need to **experience praise** and **feel valued** by teachers and support staff.

Progression

As children move through the school teaching styles change to reflect their growing maturity. This can be broadly summarised as follows:
- Younger children spend more time learning through experience, exploration and play and more emphasis is placed on developing social skills and cooperative interaction.
- Younger children experience less whole class teaching and more group activities
- Older children experience more class teaching (suitably differentiated) for more lessons and for longer periods. They are expected to work more frequently and for longer periods on their own.

How we support learning

The way we manage the children and the physical environment of the school are crucial in the success of the children's learning.

Behaviour management – The school's **Behaviour Policy** clearly sets out our policy for behaviour management and is consistently implemented by all staff. Classrooms should be quiet and well-ordered, providing a purposeful learning environment. Every effort is made to ensure that appropriate effort, work and behaviour is met with a positive response from staff. There should be clear rewards for good behaviour and sanctions should be consistently applied. Expectations of the children's behaviour in the classrooms are extended to all areas of the school, including corridors and playgrounds.

Teaching

The DfE summarises the three main teaching approaches as:

Pedagogic Approaches

	Direct	Inductive	Exploratory
Purpose	To acquire new knowledge or skills.	To develop a concept or process	To use, consolidate or refine skills and understanding.
Key features	A structured sequence, often beginning with whole-class work with modelling, demonstration or illustration. Typically this is followed by individual or group work. The sequence often ends with whole-class review.	A structured set of directed steps. Children collect and sift information, then examine data. They construct categories, and generate and test hypotheses.	Testing a prediction or hypothesis based on the understanding of a concept. Children decide what information to collect, obtain the data and analyse it.
Examples	Developing communication skills, such as using different text types in writing; listening to argument; constructing sentences orally in French; in mathematics, drawing to scale; using a spreadsheet to model the impact of light intensity on plant growth.	Generating spelling rules, e.g. when to use-sion rather than –tion; collecting visual and other information in order to understand the use of materials and processes to make a sculpture; assessing the usefulness of portraits as sources of historical information.	Exploring the best method of making a bridge from newspapers; exploring the likely causes of flooding in a particular area; exploring the waterproof properties of different materials.
Key questions	• How could you…? • Why am I doing this?	• Can you group these? • Can you see any pattern?	• What might affect? • What possible reasons are there for?

Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years: creating a learning culture, classroom community, collaborative and personalised learning (DfES ref: 0522-2004 G)

At Cavendish Primary School we implement these approaches as appropriate. Our teaching includes:

- A variety of teaching styles, adapted to the needs of individual learners or the demands of the curriculum. Individual, group and whole class teaching are employed.
- Using provision mapping and differentiation to ensure high quality provision for all.
- Ensuring that, wherever possible, teaching is interactive and supported by practical resources, auditory and visual prompts.
- Using open-ended questions to engage curiosity and challenge understanding.
- Identifying key vocabulary and reinforcing it visually.
- Displaying key information on the classroom walls.
- Creating a positive and supportive learning environment in which the children are encouraged to be responsible, resourceful and resilient with regard to their own learning.
- Publicly recognising and praising children's efforts and achievements.
- Using thinking skills techniques to help the children understand their own learning. For example, using mapping techniques to identify what they know, what they need to know or what they have learnt.

- Setting group and individual targets that are shared with the children and regularly reviewed.
- Encouraging children to verbalise what they are doing, why they are doing it, what they have learned and what they need to do next.
- Practising for test situations.
- Taking breaks to improve attention.
- Using music in class to enhance learning.
- Allowing access to a supply of water. Dehydration leads to drowsiness and poor learning performance.

Opportunities for Learning – We aim to offer a rich and varied range of opportunities for learning. This is important in motivating the children and encouraging them to become independent learners.
This includes:
- Well-structured lessons
- Interactive displays, including the children's own work and commercially produced materials, which are labelled with questions, explanations and vocabulary.
- Use of the school grounds
- Visits to places of interest including the local environment, museums, exhibitions, galleries, libraries, theatres etc
- Residential visits which provides the opportunity for in-depth study, recreation, social responsibility and understanding
- Class assemblies, concerts and drama productions
- Shared learning across the key stages, e.g. paired reading
- Specialist teachers, parents and visitors
- Celebrating talents, interests and achievements with other children
- Extra curricular clubs and activities
- Curriculum theme weeks
- Practical activities and opportunities for teamwork
- Homework to reinforce concepts and encourage independent learning skills

The following principles underlie teaching and learning at Cavendish:

- Phases within lessons should support the learning intention of the lesson by introducing, developing and reviewing this focus while maintaining a sharp beginning, cohesion across the phases of the session and a clear end.
- Children should know what they are learning, and why, as well as the extent of the progress they are making.
- While the teacher orchestrates the structure of learning, children should have opportunities to enquire, to question and to explore, so that children can apply their learning and practitioners can consolidate and build on children's knowledge, understanding and skills.

- Timings of different parts of the lesson should fit the purposes of the intended focus for learning.
- While it is necessary to plan across terms and weeks, to build in progression and to cover content, such planning should be adapted to meet the needs of children's learning in response to assessment and ongoing review.
- The importance of building on children's learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is recognised.

Different sparks ignite learning, making it vivid and real for different children. **All children need teaching tailored to their needs.** (Primary Framework for literacy and mathematics, DfES, November 2006)

Classroom management –
- Routines are set so that the children know what is expected of them at different times of the day and in different situations. For example, children should know what to do when they come into the classroom first thing in the morning or after lunch.
- The children are set work that is appropriate to their ability.
- Staff ensure that the children clearly understand the learning task, what they are expected to do and the reason for doing it. Learning intentions and success criteria are clearly explained to the pupils.
- We use assessment for learning techniques to enhance learning (see **Assessment Policy** and **Marking and Feedback Policy**)
- The children are taught to be organised and to take responsibility for their learning.
- The children are expected to take on other responsibilities in class and around the school.
- High standards of presentation of work are expected. Books should be carefully looked after, all work should be dated and titles underlined using a ruler.
- Children are taught to value the school resources and to use them carefully and effectively.
- Teaching resources are appropriately filed and stored and are provided in a way that enables the pupils to develop independence from the teacher.
- Displays and resources support EAL learners by reinforcing key vocabulary and /or using a variety of languages.

Continuing Professional Development
We are committed to the continuing professional development of all our staff. Our staff training programme is planned around the School Development Plan and staff performance management targets. There is an emphasis on raising standards in teaching and learning. (See **Staff Development Policy**)

We provide opportunities for staff to share good practice, observe each other teaching and visit other classes or schools.

Planning

Curriculum planning in the core subjects is regularly reviewed. Maths planning is based on the National Framework for Mathematics, adapted to incorporate our calculation policy (2012). English Planning is currently based on the National framework for Literacy, but has been adapted to meet the needs of the school and to reflect the renewed emphasis on grammar and punctuation.

Planning in Foundation subjects uses an ICT programme (Curriculum Complete) and is stored electronically. PSHCE and Music are separately planned and cross-curricular links identified.

Planning should clearly indicate whether differentiation is through outcome; task; expectation; grouping; explanation or questioning.

Lesson plans should take into account children's previous learning, knowledge and ability level.

Curriculum plans will be updated during 2013-14 to reflect the new Primary Curriculum which is to be introduced from September 2014.

Personalised Learning

Personalised learning is achieved through the use of differentiation, provision mapping and ICT / MLE.

Provision Mapping is used effectively to match the skills of support staff to the needs of the learner and to track progress and the effectiveness of intervention programmes. Regular assessment is used to identify under-achieving pupils or those with special educational needs and results are analysed using the school tracking system (Target Tracker). Termly pupil progress meetings are used to ensure that all pupils are making good progress.

Working with Parents

We are committed to involving parents as much as possible in their children's education. We keep parents informed through the following:
- Newsletters
- curriculum evenings
- Parent Consultation Evenings (Autumn and Spring terms)
- Annual Report (Summer Term)
- Homework diaries (KS2)
- Reading Records
- SEN reports and consultations
- Fronter and Parentmail

We set homework which increases as children progress through the school (see **Homework Policy**).

Our Home School Agreement clearly sets out the expectations parents can have of the school and those which the school has of parents.

Inclusion

Children with SEN and /or learning difficulties or disabilities
Where possible, through the use of appropriate support and differentiation, children with SEN will be working towards the same learning objectives as their peers. From time to time, those working well below the level of the whole class may be working towards related objectives chosen from the relevant objective from an earlier year.
Those children with special needs may have specific targets relating to literacy and mathematics, where appropriate. Lower attaining pupils should have access to a wide range of practical resources to help develop thinking and understanding.

Children who are able, gifted or talented
Children who are working well above the overall level of the class will be given a range of experiences designed to broaden or deepen their learning while working on the same learning objectives as their peers. This may be done by providing more demanding questions and investigations, often with a more open-ended approach. They may also be accelerating the pace of their learning by working towards relevant objectives chosen from the year above. A register of children who are gifted and talented is kept and updated and lesson planning should reflect the needs of these pupils.

Children learning EAL
Children learning English as an additional language may need support in developing language and concepts. Care is taken to ensure that pupils are grouped according to their learning ability and not on their stage of language acquisition. Through the use of appropriate support and differentiation EAL pupils experience the same level of cognitive challenge as their peers. Some pupils may receive additional support in the early stages of English acquisition.

Equal Opportunities
All children have an equal opportunity regardless of gender, race or ability, to progress and succeed in their learning. We pay particular attention to ensuring there is no gender bias in materials or in access to resources, including ICT. Teachers should pay attention to the equal distribution of their questions across all groups. Displays and resources used should show positive role models of gender, race, ethnicity and disabilities.

ICT

The use of ICT is an integral part of teaching and learning. Staff make use of all forms of ICT, including online resources, software and hardware, to support high quality teaching and learning. The use of ICT should always be relevant to the curriculum demands of the lesson. ICT is also used for assessment and planning. A wide range of ICT software is available for pupils to use independently to reinforce concepts, to provide investigational activities and to demonstrate new concepts.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is the responsibility of the Headteacher, Deputy Heads and Senior Management Team. It is the responsibility of all subject coordinators to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their subject area and to report their findings to the Headteacher.   The headteacher reports on standards in teaching and learning to the Governing Body through the Curriculum Committee. Standards are benchmarked by advice from external consultants, LA officers and joint observations.
The policy will be reviewed every four years.

Anne-Marie Inwood
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