

Learning and Teaching Policy



November 2015

Approved by Governors

Falcon Junior School **Learning and Teaching Policy**

(Written by all staff May 2014 and reviewed November 2015)

Aims and purposes

Across our school the expectation is that all children are effective learners and receive high quality teaching that leads to consistently high standards.

By adopting a whole school approach to teaching and learning, we aim to:

- Give the children the skills they require to become effective lifelong learners.
- Provide consistently high standards of learning and teaching (where every lesson is outstanding).
- Enable teachers to teach as effectively as possible.
- Provide an inclusive education for all children.
- Learn from each other, through the adoption of a collaborative, enquiry based approach to teaching and learning, where outstanding practice is shared.

Key elements and principles of outstanding learning and teaching

A Practical Guide

There is no single recipe for improving learning and teaching. However, this policy outlines some of the **key elements** that we believe are fundamental to achieving outstanding learning and teaching.

Outstanding Learning

The children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn and to reflect on how they learn. They are encouraged to integrate the MAGIC learning habits (e.g. Motivation; Attitude; Gumption; Independence; and Communication) into everyday school life.

To be an outstanding or 'MAGIC' learner, we expect all children to:

- **Be highly motivated**
 - Children are on task at every stage of a lesson and work hard to achieve the lesson objectives and success criteria.
 - Children are keen to talk about their learning, progress and achievements.
 - Children know the importance of learning ('the big picture') and understand how the skills are transferable to other subjects and real-life situations.
- **Be actively engaged in learning**
 - Children are actively engaged during all parts of the lesson – children are not sitting passively.
 - Children regularly engage in discussions with Talk Partners and Think/Pair/Share opportunities.

- **Have a positive 'I Can' attitude**
 - Children are confident learners.
 - Children thrive when they are challenged, demonstrating perseverance and resilience.
 - Children see mistakes as a learning experience.
 - Children take risks: they are willing to try new things, and push themselves outside of their comfort zones.

- **Take charge of their own learning**
 - Children regularly make choices about their learning and the conditions under which learning will be maximised.
 - Children are aware of their own learning styles.
 - Children carefully select resources to support and facilitate their learning.
 - Children have a range of strategies to draw on when they are 'stuck' (e.g. 3B4ME).
 - Children make the right choices for their own behaviour and help to 'Keep Falcon Working'

- **Work as independent thinkers**
 - Curiosity enhances learning and behaviour.
 - Children ask a range of questions about their learning and display high level thinking skills (see Bloom's Taxonomy).
 - Children carefully think about the answers to questions or problems and confidently explain their thinking.

- **Reflect on their learning**
 - Children assess their own and other children's work against success criteria.
 - Children reflect on what they have achieved and how this was accomplished.
 - Children consider what they might do next and in what ways their learning might benefit them.
 - Children regularly respond positively to feedback.

- **Work collaboratively with others**
 - Children value each other and always show respect.
 - Children take responsibility for their role in a team (e.g. facilitator, time keeper, resource manager, quality checker, etc).
 - Children listen carefully to others and respond appropriately.
 - Children readily help and support each other.

- **Use ICT effectively**
 - Children know when to use ICT to facilitate their learning.
 - Children can choose and use a range of programs confidently.

Outstanding Teaching

'I cannot teach anybody anything. I can only make them think' – Socrates

We believe that the role of the teacher should be that of a facilitator of learning.

To achieve outstanding learning and teaching, we expect all teachers to:

- **Establish positive working relationships**
 - The teacher involves all children, listens to them and responds appropriately.
 - Children are praised and rewarded regularly for their good effort and achievement.
 - The teacher enables learners to act independently, make choices about how they learn and who they learn with.
 - The Behaviour Policy, in particular, 'Keeping Falcon Working', is closely followed to promote excellent behaviour and minimise low level disruption.

- **Engage and motivate all children**
 - Because of the teacher's secure subject knowledge, learning is made relevant and interesting for all children.
 - Lessons build on children's previous learning and experiences – children understand the 'big picture'.
 - Imaginative teaching strategies are used (e.g. novelty, music, images, innovative technology, humour).
 - A range of learning styles are catered for (e.g. VAK).

- **Clearly differentiate learning to support and challenge all children.**
 - Resources are chosen carefully and are made accessible.
 - Focused guided group work is planned with a clear purpose.

- **Set clear learning objectives that are understood**
 - Learning objectives are shared and displayed.
 - Learning objectives use child friendly language.
 - Learning objectives are referred to at every stage of a lesson.
 - Learning objectives may include SEAL objectives.
 - Consistent agreed language is used throughout the school.

- **Deliver well-paced lessons that promote independent learning**
 - A creative and flexible approach to lesson structure facilitates independent learning.
 - There is a good balance of teaching and learning (20% teaching – 80% learning is recommended for most lessons).
 - Teachers give children time to deepen their learning and to apply new skills and knowledge.

- **Use effective questioning**
 - The teacher regularly uses open-ended, thought provoking and challenging questions.
 - The teacher scaffolds and develops children's thinking by using increasingly high level questioning (see Bloom's Taxonomy).
 - The teacher provides wait time (3-5 seconds is recommended) for children to think through their answers before responding.
 - Children are regularly given time to explore and articulate their thinking by discussing their responses in pairs or groups.

- **Have well planned success criteria that enables children to identify successes, difficulties and next steps**
 - Success criteria are shared and displayed.
 - Success criteria are referred to at key points in a lesson (e.g. starter, mini-plenaries, plenary).
 - Success criteria are used by children to self-assess their own or other children's work.
 - Consistent agreed language is used throughout the school.

- **Provide regular and clear feedback**
 - Feedback is linked to learning objectives and success criteria.
 - Children are aware of 'where they are at' and their current targets.
 - Children are clear about how they need to improve.
 - Individual/Class/Group targets are set for Literacy and Maths.
 - Marking identifies next steps and the teacher gives the children regular and sufficient time to respond to marking.

- **Make effective use of plenaries and mini plenaries**
 - Learning objectives and success criteria are revisited throughout the lesson.
 - Lessons always end with a review of *what* has been learned.
 - The teacher encourages children to consider *how* they learnt using prompts such as: What did you do today that you found most helpful when you were learning? If you had to do the task again, how would you do it?

- **Set high expectations**
 - Teachers use every opportunity to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills and constantly challenge children to move their learning on.
 - High standards of effort, accuracy and presentation are expected.
 - High standards of behaviour (including learning behaviour) are expected.

- **Use ICT effectively**
 - Teachers use ICT at different points in a lesson to facilitate children's learning.

- **Use additional adults effectively**

- Teaching assistants (and other adults) are clearly directed by the teacher to support learning – they know *who* they are supporting and *why*.
- Teaching assistants (and other adults) are fully engaged with children on the carpet and tables during lesson times.
- Teaching assistants (and other adults) engage the children they are working with, explaining the task, keeping them focused or using other resources to aid their understanding and facilitate learning.
- Teaching assistants (and other adults) are involved in assessing children understanding and feeding back to the teacher.
- Teaching assistants (and other adults) are involved in the delivery of effective support programmes and interventions which have a positive impact on pupil progress.

Outstanding Classrooms/Learning Environments

We realise the importance of creating an effective learning environment that supports, facilitates and celebrates learning.

To maximise the effectiveness of the learning environment, it must:

- **Be suitable for learning**

- Learning areas are tidy and well organised.
- There is proper regard for the care of equipment by teachers and children.
- The classroom is seen as a shared space that both children and adults are responsible for.
- Learning is not confined to the classroom: Use of the outdoor environment and school trips enrich and deepen children's learning.
- Classrooms and other learning areas are well-resourced.
- ICT is reliable and accessible to all.

- **Act as a stimulus for learning**

- Working walls are used for Maths and Literacy to inform learners and visitors what the current learning is.
- Working walls are updated daily where appropriate.
- Every classroom has a Reading Corner that promotes a love of reading.

- **Promote children's independent learning**

- Resources (including ICT) are accessible to all.
- Displays are interactive.
- Displays encourage children to ask and answer questions about their learning.
- Posters remind children of effective learning behaviours (e.g. MAGIC learners poster)

- **Celebrate all children's learning**

- Examples of children's work are displayed from a range of areas of the Curriculum.
- Reward systems are displayed.

Monitoring of this policy

The monitoring of this policy is carried out by all teaching staff and Curriculum Governors, through:

- a). Learning Walks
- b). Drop-Ins
- c). Lesson observations
- d). Discussions with learners

Date: November 2015

Review date: This policy will be reviewed every 3 years.

Signed:

Appendix A

At Falcon Junior School feedback is seen as an essential part of the learning process.

Why Give Feedback?

1. To celebrate children's learning and achievements
2. To ensure children are clear about what they need to do to improve (their next steps)

When to Give Feedback?

- During the lesson
- Upon completion of work (most work will be marked before the next lesson)

Who Gives Feedback?

As well as teachers giving feedback, children are encouraged to reflect on their own and other's learning and to identify next steps.

How to Give Feedback

Feedback needs to be purposeful and constructive.

To ensure consistency across the school, when giving feedback the procedures and symbols outlined below and in Appendix 1 are used. These have been agreed by all staff and are shared with pupils. They are displayed in all teaching areas.

Celebrating children's learning and achievement

This is achieved by:

- Giving verbal praise
- Selective marking which focuses on the learning objectives and success criteria
- Highlighting areas of success
- Awarding team points

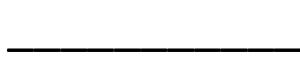
Ensuring children are clear about what they need to do to improve

This is achieved by:

- Written comments (eg. next time..., try....., go back to....., think about....)
- Giving the children regular and sufficient time to respond to marking.

Note: Self, peer and teacher feedback is more focused when pupils are involved in setting **Success Criteria** which can then be used as a benchmark for feedback.

Symbols for Written Feedback



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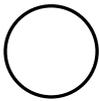
Spelling mistake

? and/or



=

Doesn't make sense



=

Missing punctuation
(or check again in maths)

//

=

New paragraph

^

=

Add words or phrases



=

Correct

Highlighter

=

Area of success

Polishing Pen
(any colour other
than blue)

=

Edited work

LOA

=

Learning objective
Achieved