



PARKLANDS JUNIOR SCHOOL

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

Updated: September 2012
To be reviewed: September 2014

At Parklands Junior School we believe that the key to maintaining and raising standards of achievement across all areas of the curriculum is the high quality of teaching offered to pupils.

- We provide a Creative Curriculum which allows more freedom for teachers and pupils to explore learning outside previously rigid subject boundaries.
- To achieve this, we aim to provide rich and inspirational learning environments that prepare pupils to engage with and contribute to the wider society in a positive way.
- Pupils see the purpose in what they are learning and have some part in the research and planning process.
- Pupils develop a range of skills and attitudes that support their ability to learn independently and effectively.
- The gap in educational attainment between all groups is reduced.
- Inclusion, diversity and community cohesion are promoted.
- Pupils work in different ways as determined by their style of learning, i.e. visual, auditory or kinaesthetic.
- Pupils are involved in collaborative work, pairs or groups, and work together to refine and develop their thinking.
- Pupils are tolerant and empathetic, and respect everyone and the environment. Their social and emotional skills are developed.
- Different subjects can be drawn together under a single theme, which is not constrained by time.
- Staff will use their professional judgement when approaching a theme or subject, following a direction that best suits pupils' needs.
- Pupils are expected to reach levels of achievement in key areas of literacy, numeracy and ICT.
- Opportunities are taken to embed maths skills so that pupils appreciate and use them.

We want our pupils to develop and have the chance to shine, to have pride in their work and are keen to share knowledge and achievement with others. The skills we provide are for life and learning and are developed across the curriculum.

This can all be further explained through Appendix 1 'What makes a Good Lesson' and Appendix 2 'A well managed Classroom'.

The Quality of Teaching

- Every child should be valued by the teacher irrespective of ability, race, gender, age or achievement.
- All lessons should have clear objectives. These must be clearly specified on planning sheets. The learning objective should be clearly stated to the class and reinforced during the lesson by writing it on the board or pupils writing it as a heading to their work if appropriate. The learning objective should be returned to at the end of a lesson so that through discussion and questioning the teacher is able to assess learning. This is particularly important when teaching literacy and numeracy.
- Teachers should use an appropriate balance of direct, focused teaching, instruction and exposition. The teacher is not employed to act largely as a servicer of pupils tasks. The use of direct teaching is therefore to be prominent.
- Teachers should ensure that teaching is appropriate to the learning style of pupils through the use of visual, auditory or kinesthetic approaches as needed to allow children to be more effective learners.
- The lesson time must be properly managed with a prompt start. Pupils' attention will drift away from the task in hand if the pace of the lesson is slow.
- Teachers must strive to achieve a match between the task set and the pupils' abilities. Differentiation should be clearly demonstrated.

The following criteria can be used to evaluate the quality of teaching

High quality teaching can be judged by the extent to which:

- Teachers set clear objectives for lessons
- Pupils are aware of the objectives
- Teachers have a secure command of the subject being taught
- Lessons have a suitable content with regard to the Primary Framework for literacy and Mathematics and pitched to the ability range.
- Activities are well chosen to promote learning of that content.
- Teaching methods engage, motivate and challenge all pupils, enabling them to progress at a suitable pace and be aware of their achievements and progress.

The Quality of Learning

- Thought should be given to the choice of tasks that motivate and challenge pupils. If pupils are insufficiently engaged in their learning tasks, unsatisfactory learning will result,
- Pupils should be encouraged to use and apply their knowledge to unfamiliar learning situations. This will enable them to develop the ability to select and apply appropriate methods and organise effectively the resources they need.

- Pupils should be encouraged to take initiatives and not always expect answers to be readily available. This will develop the pupil's ability to persevere with set tasks and discourage undue dependence on the teachers.
- Pupils should be encouraged to evaluate their progress and be self-critical.

The following criteria can be used to judge the quality of learning

- The progress made in knowledge, understanding and skills including those used in reading, writing, speaking and listening, numeracy and ICT .
- The learning skills that include observation and information seeking, looking for patterns and deeper understanding, communicating information and ideas in various ways. Also posing questions and solving problems, applying what has been learned to a range of situations and evaluating the work done.
- The attitudes to learning demonstrated by pupils, including motivation and the ability to concentrate, co-operate and work well in co-operation and collaboration with others.

The Learning Environment

The learning environment should be organised:

- so that available space and learning resources are used to best advantage;
- to enable pupils to take responsibility for the organisation and care of learning resources;
- to ensure that resources for learning are effectively stored and accessible;
- so that learners are able to use information displayed around the room to support their learning and understand that their displayed work is valued;
- so that pupils can adhere to agreed rules that impact on their learning.
- effective use is made of support staff who are aware of the needs of pupils being supported.

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Appendix 1

WHAT MAKES A GOOD LESSON

The quality of the teaching within a lesson depends on the impact it has on pupils' learning. A lesson of high teaching quality will have a positive impact on pupils' learning within the lesson. Progress will be evident. If the teaching is of poor quality the opposite comes about.

Within the context of a lesson the teacher needs to consider how well he/she meets the needs of all the pupils.

Account should be taken of: age, gender, ethnicity, capability, special educational needs, gifted and talented and EAL pupils.

For a successful lesson teachers need:-

- to show a **good subject knowledge** and be able to present and discuss the subject with the pupils' in a clear, unambiguous way using a good command in English.
- to demonstrate good, effective and detailed **planning**, setting clear learning objectives that pupils understand and set an appropriate degree of challenge. Tasks and proposed outcomes should show **differentiation**. Planning should be such that another teacher is able to teach from the plans with little difficulty.
- to ensure that pupils are aware of the **learning objectives** for the lesson. These should be identified to pupils at the start of a lesson, can be written on the board, pupils may use them as headings in written work. They should be returned to at the end of a lesson in order to **assess learning**.
- to use their skills in asking **specific questions** which help pupils to understand and which extend their thinking. Questioning should be open-ended wherever possible.
- to ensure that the lesson moves along at a **good, brisk pace** and within the defined **time** limits .
- to have **high expectations** for their pupils' levels of achievement with tasks **matched** to the level of the abilities within the class.
- to consider a range of **grouping strategies** depending on the tasks set in order to achieve the learning objectives e.g. lone working, in pairs, in small groups or all together – according to ability or mixed.
- to have **resources** that are well prepared, easily to hand, appropriate for tasks, sufficient, of high quality and accessible to pupils.

- to ensure that their teaching **enthuses and maintains the interest** of the pupils. Pupils show **motivation and enjoyment**. The teacher should at times inject **fun/humour** into the lesson where possible but see that pupils' levels of **concentration** are developed.
- to **assess pupils' work thoroughly** and use these assessments to inform future planning and help pupils overcome their difficulties. **Books/work is marked regularly** with constructive comments made to assist learning.
- to manage pupils well and insist on **high standards of behaviour** with **effective use of praise** and **rewards systems**. Proper work habits are established and encouraged and effort and good work is valued.
- to ensure that the classroom is **tidy, well managed and well organised**.
- to **use support staff effectively**. They should be well informed of:
 - learning objectives and learning outcomes
 - planning
 - the needs of individual pupils

They should give feedback to the class teacher. The teacher and the support assistant should work closely together for the benefit of a pupils' learning needs.

- To **use ICT** to support learning across all subject.
- to use **homework** effectively to reinforce and/or extend what is learned in school –
 - planned to integrate with class work.
 - is tailored to learning needs
 - helps pupils to learn independently
 - is regularly and constructively marked.

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Appendix 2

A WELL MANAGED CLASSROOM

A well managed classroom showing good organisation of space and resources as well as effective use of display boards creates an attractive learning environment that has a very positive impact on a pupil's approach to learning. A well managed and well organised classroom area maximizing the space available with routines well established also has a positive effect on pupils' behaviour.

A teacher of a well managed classroom/area:

- makes good use of the furniture available, has it placed to allow for ease of movement with access to corridors and patios free from 'obstacles'.
- tables are straightened and chairs put under tables at end of sessions particularly at the end of the day.
- encourages pupils to take the proper care of classroom furniture – e.g. no 'doodling' on or scratching of furniture.
- has a tidy teacher's table.
- ensures that pupil's trays/desks are regularly tidied and free from clutter.
- takes into account the need for safety for him/herself and pupils and promotes safety conscious behaviour within the class.
- ensures that the classroom is tidied at the end of the school day with the table tops and floors left clear in order to allow cleaning to take place efficiently and to demonstrate good order to pupils.
- organise all classroom resources appropriately making sure that they are well labelled and accessible to pupils in designated areas of which they are aware.
- ensures that resources are treated with care, are checked regularly after use and those from resource areas outside the classroom are returned complete and in the correct box etc. (particularly at the end of the term). He/she ensures that broken, damaged or incomplete resources are withdrawn with appropriate co-ordinators informed.
- maintains and checks the basic equipment for teachers and pupils in classrooms.
- ensures that own personal resources/possessions are stored adequately either in stockrooms (if you are lucky) or in filing cabinets or other storage units.

- ensures that displays are stimulating, well mounted, clearly labelled and relevant, reflecting current learning objectives (walls and table tops), should be in line with the school's Display Policy.
- has well established classroom routines. Relevant information should be displayed in order to enhance the smooth running of the class. This could include:
 - class timetable
 - visual timetables
 - class groups
 - English
 - withdrawn groups and times
 - class rules
 - monitors
 - seating plan where appropriate
 - PE days
 - homework checklist
 - targets
- has planning folders up to date, complete and available in case of his/her absence.
- leaves daily planning and necessary information when known absence occurs e.g. courses, medical appointments.
- children with medical/behavioural problems should be identified on the chart in the staffroom.