



Bedfield and Wetheringsett Cof E Primary Schools Teaching and Learning Policy

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The Mustard Seed

“The Kingdom of Heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, when it is grown, it becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in its branches.” Matthew 13:31 – 32

The Mustard Seed

“If you have faith as small as a mustard seed... nothing will be impossible for you.” Matthew 17:20-21



We believe that every child in our school is entitled to the best education that we can provide. We want to provide children with the best possible life chances and do this by 'building skills for life'.

High quality teaching and learning is key to achieving this aim and this policy reflects our high expectations of all staff and children who work in our school.

A growth mindset underpins our approach and interactions, with the belief that all can achieve with time, input and effort. We have developed a mastery approach to teaching and learning which influences how we group children and differentiate activities.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To ensure that high quality learning takes place in every lesson, which results in high standards of pupil achievement
- To embed an agreed range of good practice across the school
- To ensure consistency throughout the school
- To provide new staff with a clear vision of the school's expectations ● To provide agreed focus for monitoring learning and classroom practice

This policy reflects the aims and practices outlined in the school's Feedback and Marking, Assessment, Behaviour and SEN Policies, as well as the school's curriculum statement and should be read in conjunction with these documents. Please see the Early Years Policy in relation to teaching and learning in Early Years Foundation Stage.

2. The Curriculum and Lessons

We expect

- Teachers to follow the aims and principles contained in the school's curriculum statement
- Staff to have secure subject knowledge and understanding not only of the subject itself, but of how to teach it effectively. When support is needed, teachers can seek advice from senior leaders or subject leaders.
- Learning to be broken down in manageable chunks, with time for consolidation and the understanding that 'less is sometimes more', with opportunities to 'dig deeper and linger longer', whilst maintaining appropriate pace and challenge.
- That activities are differentiated as needed to support and challenge learners to all make progress.
- That all lessons demonstrate key elements of good formative assessment practice. ● Teachers focus on children developing a rich bank of knowledge which frees up their working memory and allows them to make important links. Subject specific skills are also important, but teachers understand that such skills are not necessarily transferable.
- Children to have access to high quality resources.
- Every lesson to have a clear learning objective which is explained to the class (not necessarily at the beginning of the lesson) and that children are supported to gain a clear understanding of what success looks like, usually through the use of success criteria.
- That staff have high expectations of presentation, quality and quantity of work. ● That staff are not chair / desk bound in lessons and that queues of children waiting to have their work looked at by an adult are avoided wherever possible through strategies such as self and peer evaluation.
- All lessons to have a plenary when the learning during the lesson can be reviewed.

3. The Role of Teaching Assistants

- Our TAs are highly valued members of our teaching staff. We know that they can have a very positive impact on learning, but are also aware that this is dependent on careful consideration as to how they are deployed.
- High quality, regular communication between the teacher and TA about the learning is crucial. To this end, TA hours allow for a 10-15 minute sit down meeting each morning about the learning that is planned for that day. It is expected that this takes place daily.
- The focus of TAs' work should be on supporting teaching and learning. The majority of this will be through working directly with children. TAs should also enable teachers to focus their efforts on teaching and learning by undertaking routine jobs for them, such as photocopying and displays.

TAs are expected to:

- Work with a range of pupils, not just the lower attaining.
- Be aware of the negative impact on learning that an over-reliance on adults can have. This can happen particularly with low attaining pupils and all teaching staff are aware of the importance of developing independent learning in all children (see P4 below).
- Support and challenge children to develop learning and not focus on task completion.

Role during the input:

- As we are aware of potential negative impact of 'stereo' talk to individuals, when a TA sits with a child and repeats or rephrases what the teacher has said during the input, it is entirely valid for TAs to be doing classroom 'jobs', ideally within earshot of the lesson, or support by managing behaviour, leaving the teacher free to focus on teaching during this part of the lesson.
- TAs may also work with an individual or group of children (including a whole year group in mixed age classes) during the input, in order for all learners' needs to be best met.

4. Growth Mindset

- Having a growth mindset has become a fundamental part of our outlook and it is expected that all staff embrace this approach. This will be part of the induction programme for new staff.
- This needs to be communicated to children explicitly and implicitly: through explicit teaching about mindsets, and implicitly in the way it is embedded in our practice. Praise should therefore be linked to process, particularly effort, not outcome and feedback should be specific. For example, staff should avoid phrases like 'You are a good writer/artist/mathematician/runner', using instead phrases like 'You really thought of your choice of words in that writing'.
- Having a growth mindset also has implications for the way children are grouped and learning is differentiated. As a school, we are moving away from fixed ability grouping, providing opportunities for self-differentiation and being flexible when work is provided for different groups. Children should be given every opportunity to surprise us with what they can achieve.

5. Mastery

- Our growth mindset approach fits in with the mastery approach to teaching that we have developed. This is based on the principle that the vast majority of children (i.e. 85%) in a year group should be working on the same learning objective, with differentiation through scaffolding, timely interventions and opportunities for depth and enrichment, all underpinned by high quality formative assessment..

7. Learning Partners

- They have opportunities to work with learning partners throughout the week, supporting each other's learning. This can include paired work, peer evaluation and being response partners during input sessions.
- Learning partners are used to support children's ability to express themselves through talk, their ability to get on with each other and to be active learners.
- How to be a successful learning partner is something that children will need to be actively supported to learn and teachers put time and effort into fostering these skills.

8. Independent Learning

- We believe that it is important that children are able to be successful independent learners. This is actively encouraged through:
 - providing tasks with an appropriate level of challenge
 - careful planning of opportunities for independent learning for pupils of all levels of attainment, including SEN
 - promoting independent learning skills - eg how to respond to a challenge/ what to do if you are stuck (including the use of 'the 6Bs' as children move through the school) / how to challenge yourself
- Staff also encourage children's independence in the way they respond to children. For example, to throwing back a query with a question e.g. 'My pencil is blunt' with 'What could you do to solve that problem?'

9. Learning Environment

- Working walls are used throughout KS1 and 2 to support learning in English and Maths. They should reflect and support the current learning by, for example, providing prompts and support for children, celebrating learning and mapping the learning journey.
- Resources should be easily accessible and well labelled in order to encourage independence.
- Classrooms and shared areas should be neat and free from clutter to model to children how we value and look after the school.
- The atmosphere should be supportive, where mistakes are celebrated, but consistently high expectations for learning behaviour, including presentation, is maintained.

10. Displays

- Displays need to have a clear purpose and an impact. Many displays will be working walls (see above). Other displays could be
 - celebrations of learning
 - showing a learning journey
 - prompts to support learning
- Displays should be changed at least termly, unless they are 'live' i.e. regularly added to, or teachers are sure that they continue to effectively support learning

11. Presentation

- Work in all subjects should have a learning objective and date. Usually these are printed by the teacher to avoid learning time being used by pupils to write them.
- High standards of presentation are expected in all work in books (except 'rough books'). Children are asked to repeat the work if presentation is not of a standard staff know the child is capable of producing.
- A4 books are used for English and maths.

- Wherever possible, work completed on sheets is stuck neatly into books to show that it is valued and to show the full learning journey.
- All work should be marked (see Feedback and Marking Policy) and teachers should model the expected handwriting with correct letter formation and size of letters.

12. Knowledge Organisers

- In history, geography, science and beliefs and values, each unit's learning should be distilled into a Knowledge Organiser that is one side of A4.
- A copy should be stuck in each child's exercise book and homework book at the beginning of each unit.
- Weekly multiple choice quizzes should be given at some point during each lesson in order to provide an opportunity for children to retrieve their previous learning, supporting their long term memory.
- More guidance on Knowledge Organisers is available [here](#).

12. Values for Life and Church School

- Each half term, the school focuses on a 'Value for Life'. These are the basis of our Collective Worship, but should also be embedded in practice and celebrated in the classrooms and throughout the school.
- Staff are expected to refer to the current value when an appropriate link can be made.
- Prayers should be said in each class during collective worship, before lunch and before going home. Prayers should be introduced with the phrase 'Time to think; time to pray'.

