



Defford-cum-Besford Church of England
First School

"Through Faith, Friendship and Fun we Learn and Grow"

Teaching and Learning Policy

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Through faith, friendship and fun we learn and grow

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1. Aims of the Policy

We believe that “Through Faith, Friendship and Fun we Learn and Grow.” At Defford-cum-Besford CE First School we focus on creating an environment that allows all children to feel valued and to succeed.

At Defford-cum-Besford C.E. First School we are committed to high quality teaching and learning to raise standards of achievement for all children. This policy summarises expectations and common working practices within our school. 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. This policy covers both the school and the governor-led preschool.

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

2. Principles of Teaching and Learning

Learning is the purpose of the whole school and is a shared commitment. At Defford-cum-Besford C.E. First 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, 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.

As a school, we are committed to our vision – *Through faith, friendship and fun we learn and grow.*

3. 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 their 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;
- reviewing personal and professional development in order to ensure a high level of professional expertise.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Learning and teaching are 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:

- treating 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 and continuous;
- be good role models, punctual, well prepared and organised;
- 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;
- 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;
- support the school's homework policy and give due importance to any homework;
- ensuring that all contact addresses and telephone numbers are up to date and correct;
- allowing their child to become increasingly independent as they progress throughout the school;
- informing the school of reasons for their child's absence;
- actively supporting the Home-School Agreement.

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, taking letters home promptly, etc;
- conducting themselves in an orderly manner in line with the expected behaviour policy;
- taking increased responsibility for their own learning.

The **community** is invited to support the school by:

- contributing to activities, such as assemblies, educational visits, 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.

5.Planning

The foundation for curricular development is the School Development Plan, developed through a process of collaboration between staff, and approved by governors.

At Defford-cum-Besford C.E. First School we are committed to following the programmes of study as required by the Early Years Foundation Stage and the National Curriculum. Our curriculum has been designed collaboratively by our team of teaching staff. It covers the National Curriculum and provides opportunities for a greater depth of learning through its design. For R.E. we follow the locally agreed Worcestershire Syllabus and the Understanding Christianity Resources.

Our curriculum is taught through discreet lessons. There is sometimes a wider theme in a class, but lessons are only linked to this theme when it supports children's learning. Regular staff meetings are used to discuss various aspects of the curriculum and ensure consistency of approach and standards.

Planning is made with reference to the National Curriculum, Early Years Foundation Stage and the Whole School Curriculum Plan.

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 Defford-cum-Besford C.E. First 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.

Subject leaders have a variety of roles. These include:

- taking the lead in policy development and the production of schemes of work designed 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.

Teachers ensure breadth and balance to the curriculum and endeavour to make use of cross curricular opportunities to enhance learning.

6. 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:

- resources in each area will be grouped according to curriculum subject;
- book corners will be comfortable and attractive;
- labels and posters should be used wherever possible/appropriate to reflect the language diversity in the school;
- areas for imaginative play will change regularly, in order to give opportunities for a range of play and role-play which will contribute to learning in a purposeful manner;
- pupils will be involved in the maintenance and care of all equipment and resources.

Classrooms provide a stimulating and purposeful learning environment, including thought provoking and stimulating displays.

Volunteer helpers assist with the many aspects of school life, including supporting reading and assisting with school visits.

School events such as performances and assemblies are seen as opportunities for all pupils to demonstrate their own best performance. Certificates are given weekly to celebrate individual academic or behavioural achievement. 'Star awards' are given every week to a pupil in each class for achieving their personal best in an area of learning. These are selected by class teachers and a reason is always given for what a child has done to be awarded their Star Award.

7. Quality First Teaching

We have high expectations of our learners. We believe that the most effective way for all children to get the most from their education is through Quality First Teaching. This includes a focus on inclusive teaching and learning that is achieved through:

- Small step planning
- Planning for errors
- Assessment for learning strategies
- The use of manipulatives and representatives
- Metacognition and modelling
- The explicit teaching of vocabulary
- Examples and non-examples
- Ensuring 100% participation in lessons
- Purposeful practice
- (Pedagogical) content knowledge

All children have access to the same curriculum at Defford. We make adjustments to our teaching to support all children to access their learning. This may take many forms in the classroom and may include some children receiving additional, targeted support through individual or small group interventions.

Pupils with special educational needs receive support provided by a learning support teacher or 1:1 Tuition where appropriate. Extra support is given in the classroom from learning support assistants. Additionally, advice is sought from relevant external support agencies when and where the need demands it. (See Special Educational Needs Policy)

8. Homework

Homework can be a valuable element of the learning process.

We believe that homework should be set:

- to involve parents in their children's learning;
- to help parents keep abreast of what their child can and cannot do;
- to take advantage of the home context to apply learning;
- to encourage children to talk about their work to their parents and explain what they are doing and how;
- to extend the time for learning, thus enabling children to practise and consolidate their skills in spelling and rapid recall of number facts, including times tables;
- to view learning as a lifelong process and not just restricted to school hours.

The school's agreed practice for homework is that:

- homework of regular reading and sharing books is expected across the school
- spellings and times tables are set on a regular basis in Key Stage 2

- children should understand exactly what they are expected to do, how to do it, and how long it should take;
- homework should sometimes involve the participation of the parents;

We recognise that for some families, the additional time required from homework can put a strain on individuals. We hope that parents are able to support their children with their homework but sometimes, for a variety of reasons, this cannot be achieved. Due to this, children will not be punished in school for not completing their homework.

9. Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Regular assessments are made of pupils' work in order to establish the level of attainment and to inform 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 Key Stage 1 through the use of SATs and teacher assessment. We will still be using the End of Key Stage 1 assessments to support teacher assessments after they become optional in 2024.

Phonics are tested in Year 1 and re-tested where necessary in Year 2. Optional tests are also taken in Years 3 and 4. The national EYFS Baseline 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/quizzes (low stakes) 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.

Feedback to pupils about their own progress is achieved through discussion and the marking of work. Effective marking:

- helps children understand how to improve and comments aim to be positive and constructive;
- is often done 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.

All results from assessments are analysed and used to inform future planning.

Cross phase continuity is ensured by:

- home visits prior to commencement in Preschool and Reception;

- cross-phase liaison meetings;
- in-school liaison meetings between staff;
- liaison meetings between the Year 4 teacher and those from prospective Middle schools;
- visits to Middle schools by Year 4 pupils;
- transfer of pupil records of progress and summative assessment results.

Records of progress kept for each child are:

- updated as a minimum annually by teachers;
- examined by class teachers at the start of each academic year as they prepare for a new class;
- retained throughout the child's time at the school and appropriate records passed on to other schools when pupils leave.

Reporting to parents is done twice a year through consultations and once through a written report.

10. Monitoring and Evaluation

Pupils' work will be monitored and moderated regularly in each of the core curriculum areas by the subject leaders and the Headteacher. A termly review of monitoring procedures is held with all members of the teaching staff, this 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 informs learning and teaching.

11. Teaching Strategies and Styles

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:

- provision of an ambitious, integrated curriculum;
- teacher observation;
- 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;

- 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.

The emphasis of our policy is on a good variety of experiences, and we encourage children increasingly to take an active role in their own learning. Thus:

- investigative work is used;
- children are encouraged to communicate findings in a variety of ways;
- opportunities are provided for children to become involved in decision making and to take responsibility, along with staff, for their own learning.

At Defford-cum-Besford C.E. First School we recognise the importance of key skills. Opportunities will be made available across the curriculum to develop:

- oracy;
- application of number;
- communication;
- computing skills
- problem solving;
- working with others;
- improving own learning and performance.

Thinking skills will also be developed across the curriculum. This will include:

- creative thinking;
- enquiry;
- information processing;
- reasoning;
- evaluation.

At Defford-cum-Besford C.E. First School we recognise the importance of formative assessment and the important role it has to play in creating a learning culture. We believe that formative assessment furthers and deepens learning and consists of four basic elements, underpinned by confidence that every child can improve and an awareness of the importance of children's high self-esteem. The four elements are: sharing learning goals; effective questioning; self and peer evaluation; effective feedback. Formative assessment carries with it the expectation that, when properly motivated and appropriately taught, all learners can reach a level of achievement which

may currently appear beyond them. It provides a breadth of proven life-long learning skills based on an understanding of how we learn rather than what we ought to be learning. This includes:

- creating a positive learning environment;
- focusing all feedback on specific performance improvements which can be acted on;
- sharing an overview of content, process and benefits of the learning to come;
- engaging learners by posing problems and challenging thinking;
- providing opportunities for learners to meet the challenge in a variety of pairings and with multiple ways of representing their understanding;
- creating space for reflection and meaningful dialogue;
- reviewing what has been learned, how it was learned and how it will be used.

12. Learning Processes and Learning Styles

Children enter school at different stages of development. Children learn in different ways and at different rates of progress. In the course of learning, children develop their skills through a variety of processes and learning styles. These include:

- investigation;
- experimentation;
- listening;
- observation;
- talking and discussion;
- asking questions;
- child-initiated play;
- practical exploration and role play;
- retrieving information;
- imagining;
- repetition;
- problem-solving;
- making choices and decision-making.

At Defford-cum-Besford C.E. First School opportunities are organised to allow pupils access to these processes, and for them to develop their own strategies to gain knowledge and skills. We aim to provide opportunities to develop a wide range of learning styles. We recognise that each child has a unique way of learning and that learning preference is affected by previous experience, competence, confidence, beliefs and values.

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.

Teachers at Defford-cum-Besford C.E. First 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
- they have clearly defined targets which they can successfully achieve eg appropriate time scale

Effective learning is ensured through the process of monitoring successful teaching and pupil's learning outcome i.e. Baseline Assessment, reading ages and SATS results.

Successful teaching takes account of children's prior learning and must ensure continuity and progression.

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 – there is differentiation with 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
- well paced – there is a sense of urgency, driven by the need to make progress and succeed
- informed – by assessment outcomes

13. Resources

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

- there is a range of appropriate, accessible and labelled 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 Defford-cum-Besford C.E. First 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.

