WINWICK C.E. (Aided) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Teaching & Learning Policy

Table of Contents

Aims and purposes

Any attempt to raise standards in our school must be focused on the classroom. Continued and sustained improvement is dependent upon improving the quality of teaching and learning that is taking place on a daily basis.

Across our school the expectation is that all pupils are provided with high quality learning experiences that lead to consistently high levels of pupil achievement.

We expect every teacher to be a good teacher – no child deserves less.

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

- to provide consistency of teaching and learning across our school.
- to enable teachers to teach as effectively as possible.
- to enable children to learn as efficiently as possible.
- to give children the skills they require to become effective lifelong learners.
- to provide an inclusive education for all children.
- to learn from each other, through the adoption of a collaborative, enquiry based approach to teaching and learning, where good practice is shared.

There is no single recipe for improving teaching and learning in a school. However this policy outlines some of the **key elements** which are key to raising standards in teaching and learning. It also sets out a **broad structure** for lessons, based on best practice and research linked to how we best learn.

When reading this policy it is important to remember that adopting a broad template for structuring lessons does not preclude:

- Spontaneity
- Creativity
- Imagination
- Individuality

… unless you let it**!**

Lesson structure

All lessons in our school should follow a basic structure made up of four parts:

- Phase One: set the scene, place learning in a wider context, link to prior learning; review previous lesson; provide the 'big picture', share learning intentions.
- Phase Two: pupils receive new information; instruction/exposition; (teaching)
- Phase Three: pupils make sense of information; processing; understanding;(learning)
- Phase Four: review information (plenary).

Precise interpretation of the four phase structure will inevitably be very different in different situations. Age, ability, timing of the lesson, subject area and the particular focus for the lesson will all have a significant impact.

The boundaries between the phases will almost certainly be blurred.

Teachers may well scroll through the phases more than once during the lesson. For example, after a short period of exposition, pupils may be engaged in an activity designed to help them make sense of new material. This may be followed by another period of exposition and an appropriate exercise. (mini plenaries)

The phases are not always sequential. Review, for example, is not confined to the end of the lessons. Good teachers weave review through the entire lesson and know that success criteria are only successfully when repeated and referred to throughout the lesson.

Teaching and learning is not the same thing. Encountering information is not the same as understanding it. While the stages are inextricably linked, they are separate processes. This must be reflected in the lesson.

Phase One – Overview

Although this is relatively short in duration it includes a number of key features.

The emphasis on this phase is on;

Creating an appropriate working atmosphere

Pupils will not learn if they are not in an appropriate state to learn. We use a range of strategies to establish a climate conducive to learning including:

- Creating a classroom environment that is stimulating, reassuring and organised,
- Being fully prepared for lessons,
- Ensuring resources are prepared and on tables in advance of lessons,
- Other adults to sensitively engage with a pupil who is not 'ready to learn'.
- Greeting pupils with a smile!

Linking the lesson to prior learning

Linking the lesson to prior knowledge, e.g. reviewing previous lesson;

- Think about the three most important things you learnt in the last lesson – now tell your partner.
- In two minutes, I am going to ask you what you learnt last lesson. You may talk to your partner if you wish.
- Today's lesson is about the water cycle. Jot down on your whiteboards what you already know. Work in pairs.

Providing an overview

The brain is more likely to absorb details when it can place them within a wider context. This is often referred to as *'providing the big picture first'.*

Sharing learning intentions with pupils

Students must know exactly what they are going to learn and what is expected of them by the end of the lesson.

For learning intentions to be shared effectively, teachers must:

- Move away from saying 'Today we are doing'… and instead say 'By the end of today's lesson you will all know/be able to/understand…'.
- Make learning intentions specific
- Use child-friendly language – there is little point in sharing learning intentions if students don't understand what you mean.
- Write them down
- Refer to them: at the start of the lesson, during the lesson and during the review phase.

Triggering the brain

The brain will tend to notice things if has been primed to look for them.

Beginning a lesson by saying;

'Today when I am reading I want you to listen out for some really powerful adjectives that you can use in your own writing later on ' or
'For homework tonight, I am going to be asking you to write down the functions of the different parts of a plant – you will find out what they are in today's lesson'

increases the chances of pupils doing exactly that.

Stimulating curiosity, generating interest and setting the challenge

When we capture the imagination and stimulate curiosity in the first few minutes of the lesson, we go a long way to ensuring a high quality learning experience.

Phase Two – Receiving New Information

The emphasis in this phase is on:
Providing students with new information or skills.

This is the teaching phase. Although we want all pupils to understand the information as they encounter it, the emphasis during phase two is on providing the new information. New information is delivered in many ways:

- Exposition
- Audio-visual aids – e.g. video clips
- Diagrams, pictures etc
- ICT – CD roms, Internet
- Demonstration
- Modelling
- Books
- Investigation
- Exploration
- Experimentation

The quality of the input during this phase will have a big bearing upon the extent to which pupils understand information. While high-quality exposition does not guarantee understanding, it does make it significantly more likely.

We use a number of techniques across our school to ensure that the quality of input in phase two is kept high.

Periods of exposition are short

Pupils have limited concentration spans. A widely used and useful rule of thumb is that concentration span will be about two minutes in excess of chronological age. Periods of exposition are therefore kept short and punctuated by regular breaks or activities. In general terms, significantly more learning will take place when new information is transferred and explained in three bursts of ten minutes than in one thirty minute session.

More than one 'beginning' is created

Pupils tend to remember more from the beginning of an experience. When exposition is chunked into 10-15 minute slots, a number of *'beginnings'* are created in the lesson. Make the new start obvious. Use phrases such as, *'Now we are moving on to …'* or *'The next activity we are going to be doing …'. 'I want you to move back to the carpet for the next part of our lesson.'*

The input phase is punctuated with questions

Although phase two is principally about exposition and delivering new information, it should be punctuated by regular questioning.

Closed questions will keep pupils alert and provide instant feedback as to whether they have heard correctly and have understood – although at a shallow level.

The input phase is punctuated with activity (model whatever you want the children to do)

Punctuate the input of new information (phase two) with activities designed to help pupils make sense of it (phase three). This kind of integrated, alternating pattern of 'phase two, phase three, phase two, phase three' can often be more effective than an extended period of explanation.

For example, a teacher might be modelling how to write complex sentences. She might ask the children to work with a partner to write one together on a mini whiteboard before continuing with further instruction.

New information is presented in several different ways (VAK)

The fact that people prefer to receive information in different ways demands that information is transmitted in more than one way during phase two. A verbal explanation may well be clear, concise and of high quality. However, two thirds of the class may be working outside of their preferred style or have English as an additional language and struggle to grasp what is being said.

We aim to make learning multi-sensory so that pupils have opportunities to learn from seeing, hearing and doing.

Phase Three – processing the information

The emphasis in Phase Three is on:
- developing understanding
- demonstrating understanding
- assessing understanding

This is the key phase.
It is the opportunity for pupils to make sense of information. We play a significant role during this crucial phase, encouraging and reassuring at an emotional and guiding level while prompting and challenging pupils towards understanding.
The extent to which pupils will understand information depends on three factors

1. Quality of interactions

It is adults who help pupils make sense of information. The frequency and nature of interactions between teacher and pupils is highly significant. We develop understanding by
- Using open ended questions.
- Providing wait time - pupils need time to think through their answers before replying.

- Providing thinking time by giving an advance warning, such as '*In two minutes I am going to ask you…. '*
- Allowing pupils to explore and articulate their thinking by giving them time to discuss their responses in pairs or groups. Pupils then respond with *'We think that…'.*
- Ensuring pupils fully understand the question by asking them to say it back or rephrase it.
- Extending and deepening understanding by asking follow-up questions such as *'What made you think that?'*
- Asking pupils to identify three possible answers and then select the best one (so they don't always give you the first answer that pops into their head).
- Scaffolding thinking and answering – for example: '*in 2 minutes I am going to ask you X, but before I do, I'd like you to think about (or talk about) A. Now I'd like you to think about B. Now can you respond to my original question?'*
- *Working with a focused group.*

Talking

We learn:

10% of what we read
20% of what we hear
30% of what we see
50% of what we see and hear
70% of what we discuss with others
80% of what we experience
95% of what we teach to others
   - *William Glaser (1960s)*

At our school we believe that **Talking** is central to learning. All lessons include planned and unplanned opportunities to discuss questions and extend thinking '***talking partners'*** are regular features in all lessons.

Tasks that engage pupils and challenge them to think

Making personal sense of information involves re-creating and assimilating it into existing understanding. It is an active process and demands that the learner actually does something, not least at a cognitive level. Activities in the third phase;
- Require pupils to do something at a cognitive level
- Provide a degree of challenge
- Require students to re-create rather than re-produce information
- Develop understanding
- Allow pupils to demonstrate understanding
- Give the teacher an opportunity to assess understanding.
- Encourage pupils to work both independently and collaboratively
- Encourage pupils to work for a sustained period

Phase Four – Review

The emphasis in this phase is on:

- ***Reviewing what has been learned***
- ***Reflecting on how it has been learned.***

Review is a key to memory and certainly not confined to the end of the lesson. Good teachers weave review throughout the entire lesson and are constantly referring students back to the success criteria of the lesson, and reinforcing prior learning. Reviewing material is a highly significant part of the learning process, not least because large amounts of information can be forgotten very quickly.

Key features of Phase Four are:

Pupils are actively involved

When teachers summarise what has been learned, the effect on pupils' memories is relatively insignificant. However when the pupils themselves identify what they have learned as the lesson draws to a close, their memories will be given a significant boost.

Refer back to the learning intentions and success criteria.

Encourage pupils to reflect on what they have learned and what has helped them to learn. Use prompts like:

- What did you do today that you found most helpful when you were learning?
- What did you do today that you found less helpful?
- If you had to do the task again, how would you do it?
- If you had to give one piece of advice to someone tackling the same task tomorrow, what would it be?

Key elements and principles of teaching and learning across our school – a practical guide!

All lessons across our school should include the following key elements to ensure high quality teaching and learning. New teachers to our schools will receive training to ensure they fully understand these elements and to enable them to embed them in their everyday practice.

All lessons have…*Clear Learning Intentions*

- Learning intentions are shared orally and displayed.
- All learning intentions are written up and shared orally in child friendly language.
- Learning intentions are not muddled up with the context of the lesson.

- Children write the learning intention in their book at ability appropriate.
- When marking children's work, the main focus is on meeting the learning intention.

All lessons have… *Well planned success criteria*

- All pupils are clear about how they will achieve the learning intention.
- Success criteria's are shared
- Weekly planning includes a success criteria for each learning intention.
- When applicable children use the success criteria to self-assess their own or their partner's work.
- Children are reminded of the success criteria during the lesson – often children's work is used to illustrate the success criteria in action.

All lessons are … *Clearly differentiated to enable all pupils to access learning*

- All learners are challenged appropriately.
- Planning shows clear differentiation.

All pupils are… *Actively engaged in learning*

- Pupils are actively engaged during all parts of the lesson – teachers take into account children's concentration span and ensure pupils are not sitting passively for long periods.
- Opportunities to *Think/Pair/Share* and discussions with a *Talk Partner* are regular features in all lessons.
- Mini whiteboards are used for short bursts of activity, to develop understanding and to ensure children are active and engaged during the lesson.
- Visuals, artefacts, auditory input are all used creatively as a way to enhance learning.

All pupils receive regular and clear …*feedback which enhances learning*
- AFL is embedded in everyday practice and is used to inform teaching and learning.
- All pupils are clear about how they need to improve.
- Marking is linked to the learning intention and identifies next step prompts
- Pupils are given regular time to address issues raised in marking.

Learning is enhanced through …*The use of ICT.*
- ICT is used to enhance learning where ever possible. ***The use of ICT is highly visible and effective in all teaching and learning contexts across our school and teachers are continually searching for ways to use technology as a learning tool.***

Learning is enhanced through the use of… *Consistent classroom management strategies.*

Behaviour management strategies are used in order to minimise the time spent on behaviour management and maximise the time spent on learning.

Learning is enhanced through the …*Effective use of additional adults*

- Additional adults are clearly directed to support learning.
- Teaching assistants are fully engaged with pupils on the carpet and tables during lesson times. **They are not photocopying work, sharpening pencils or sticking work in books during learning time!**
- They are clear about who they are supporting and why.
- Planning is shared in advance with teaching assistants.
- They sit next to the pupil/pupils they are working with, quietly engaging the pupils, explaining the task or using other resources, e.g. number line to facilitate learning.
- They are involved in assessing pupil's understanding, recording observations and feeding assessments to the classroom teacher

Classroom environment

The surroundings in which children learn can greatly influence their academic performance and well-being in school. The better the school looks, the more it inspires the people inside it - a well-cared for classroom can make pupils feel that what they achieve and how they themselves are perceived is important.

Across our school we aim to ensure that all classrooms, group learning areas and whole school areas are spaces that everyone can use to learn and be proud of.
All classes across the school should have:

Topic displays and working walls are often used in classrooms to support and may include:

- The title of the topic
- Children's work
- Children's questions
- Key vocabulary.
- Visuals to stimulate thinking.

Careful consideration is given to how to make the learning wall a focal point in the class. It should be an immediate point of interest in the classroom and all children should be confident talking about 'the wall'.

General classroom organisation

Classrooms are bright, well organised learning spaces. Pupils know how to access resources and respect the classroom environment. Different teachers have different likes/dislikes about how to organise their classrooms. However to ensure a sense of

security and consistency across the school the points below need to be taken on board in all classes in Key Stage 1 and 2.

- Class rules/code of conduct is on display in all classes.
- Classrooms are tidy, labelled and organised. Pupils take responsibility for ensuring their classroom is a pleasant and safe place to learn.
- Pupils are taught to respect equipment and resources.
- **Basic** equipment is easily accessible – pupils do not have to waste time organising stationary.
- All trays are clearly labelled.

Whole School environment

Whole school displays give out a very strong message to our school community. They are a celebration of children's work. These highly visible displays need to be planned carefully and thought given to how to display children's work in the most creative way possible.

Marking and feedback

Marking has the potential to be the most powerful, manageable and useful diagnostic record of achievement.

- (Clarke, S 2001)

Overview of marking across our school

- All work is marked in green pen.
- As a general principle, no work should be returned to a pupil without being acknowledged in some way.
- We use the school marking code to draw attention to incorrect work.
- Next step prompts are used to help pupils improve their work. This is particularly the case in extended writing where a tick or a comment like 'well done' is *not* sufficient.
- Where appropriate marking must be linked to the learning intention and success criteria.
- All adult comments must be clearly legible.
- Comments on pupils' work should be mostly positive and encouraging.
- Pupils are given time to read and act on comments.
- Pupils are taught how to improve their own work and sometimes that of their partner.

Key prompts to ask when planning and delivering a lesson

Am I crystal clear about what I want the children to be able to do/to understand/to know at the end of the lesson?	Have I written the learning intention up on the whiteboard in child-friendly language?	Have I thought about the steps to success and planned the success criteria in advance?
Have I thought about the questions I will need to ask to deepen children's understanding / assess learning?	Have I thought about how I am going to engage and motivate the children at the start and during the lesson?	Have I thought about how I will meet the needs of all learners, including the more able? Are activities challenging and designed to deepen understanding?
Have I set clear expectations of what pupils are expected to achieve by the end of the session?	Have I thought about how I will meet the needs of the EAL leaners in my class e.g. what visuals will I use in the lesson?	Am I giving the children thinking and talking time before answering questions?
Am I going to be introducing new vocabulary to the children?	Have I made sure children are not going to be sitting passively for long periods?	Have I included any time for pupils to respond to marking from previous lessons?
How am I going to meet the learning styles of all the children?	Have I shared the planning with my teaching assistants? Is s/he clear who s/he is supporting and how?	Have I got a balance of teacher instructions, intervention and children working independently?
How am I going to conduct my plenary?	Have I planned opportunities for pupils to talk about their learning in pairs or groups?	How are pupils going to assess their own learning or that of their peers?

Review

The governing body reviews this policy bi-annually. The governors may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the government introduces new regulations, or if the governing body receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved.

Accepted by Governors on: _____

Signed by: _____(Chair of Governors)

Review date: _____

Policy Written: November 2014

Policy Reviewed: November 2016