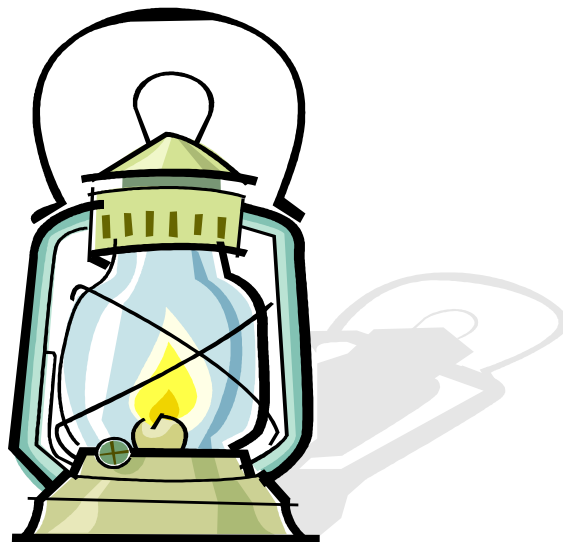




TEACHING & LEARNING POLICY



Autumn 2014



“Shine like a lantern in the presence of the Lord.”

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AIMS OF THE SCHOOL

The main purpose of St Bede's School, as a Voluntary Aided School, is to provide a sound Catholic education where the development of the whole person can take place. This will happen through the following aims.

- To give the pupils a knowledge and understanding of the content of the Catholic Faith and the experience of a living and worshipping community
- To develop the pupils' ability to think and express themselves logically, with confidence, independence of thought and flexibility of mind in order to stimulate the best possible progress and highest attainment
- To provide a safe and secure environment in which pupils can develop and learn together in an atmosphere of mutual trust
- To foster strong links with the home and local community
- To provide rich and varied contexts for learning, application of knowledge, and understanding and skills
- To help the pupils make informed choices and appreciate the relevance of their achievements to life and society outside school
- To develop physical skills in which pupils pursue a healthy lifestyle, and keep themselves and others safe
- To help pupils to be as physically fit as they can be to learn
- To provide a stimulating environment for pupils to take responsibility and to contribute to decisions made about the school
- To have opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and to contribute to decisions made about the school
- To ensure every pupil is given equal opportunity
- To embed the Help Children Achieve More Agenda

Aim of a Teaching and Learning Policy

- To outline successful and effective teaching methods and learning strategies
- To ensure a shared understanding of good classroom practice
- To raise and maintain standards and levels of achievements across the key stages
- To inform our planning and assessment procedures
- To provide guidelines on how to support and develop school improvement
- To underpin and reinforces all other school policies and schemes of work

Rationale

Good classroom practice involves clear and realistic planning with year groups and phase groups. We believe in effective and informed planning in order to ensure continuity and progression and to provide adequate opportunities for quality assessment. Our planning is based on the schemes of work relevant to each key stage.

In each teaching area we believe that there must be an effective and efficient use of space and equipment. Well labelled and organised resources should be accessible to both staff and pupils to promote independent learning whilst taking into account the limitations of space and accommodation in certain classrooms. An orderly working environment should be established to facilitate quality teaching and learning.

Within each classroom, we believe it necessary to implement well structured and manageable routines to assist the process of teaching and learning on a daily basis.

How do Children Learn?

We believe pupils learn when the pupil:

- is valued and has a positive self image
- has a positive teacher/pupil relationship
- experiences positive home/school liaison

the school:

- is relaxed and happy with a quiet calm atmosphere

the classroom:

- offers a stimulating and challenging environment
- has appropriate resources which meet the needs of all pupils
- is well organised
- caters for individual needs

the curriculum:

- is differentiated to suit individual needs, recognising the entitlement of a full curriculum for all
- is interesting and appropriate to the pupils' own experiences, age and ability and cross curricular where possible
- is well planned
- provides opportunities and experiences of working collaboratively and as individuals
- provides a vehicle for continuous assessment and review of both pupils' work and content

the staff:

- have shared values, similar vision and aims
- work together to improve the basic skills of all the pupils
- have well defined roles
- have structured training
- are well organised and managed

parents and the wider community:

- have close involvement with school
- have no reservations about coming into school and making appointments with staff
- feel valued

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

In EYFS the curriculum is based on the EYFS curriculum. An EYFS Policy is in place. The principles for the policy are as follows:

1. Early childhood is the foundation on which pupils build the rest of their lives; it is not just a preparation for the next stage - it is vitally important in itself

2. Pupils develop emotionally, intellectually, morally, physically, spiritually and socially and at different rates. All aspects of development are equally important and are interwoven
3. Young pupils learn from everything that happens to them and do not separate their learning into subjects
4. Pupils learn most effectively by doing rather than by being told
5. Pupils learn most effectively when they are actively involved and interested
6. Pupils need time and space to produce work of quality and depth
7. What pupils can do rather than what they cannot do are the starting points in their learning
8. Playing and talking are the main ways through which young pupils learn about themselves and the world around them
9. Pupils who feel confident in themselves and their own ability have a head start to learning
10. Pupils who are encouraged to think for themselves are more likely to act independently
11. All pupils have abilities which should be identified and promoted
12. The relationships which pupils establish with adults and other pupils are of central importance in their development

Good Teaching Strategies

Teachers must be sensitive to the learning needs of the individual pupil. We realise that effective teaching must always engage and build upon the knowledge and understanding that each pupil brings to the concepts being taught. **“Effective teaching” can be defined as teaching that enables the greatest number of pupils to realise their potential.**

Effective Teaching in a Primary Class

OFSTED research reports that the most effective lessons share similar characteristics:

- an orderly atmosphere - a pre-requisite for learning
- an attractive working environment - improving morale at both teacher and pupils levels
- maximised learning time, including:
 - ⇒ how much of the day is devoted to academic subjects
 - ⇒ the proportion of each lesson spent on new learning
 - ⇒ the amount of time spent on teaching rather than administration
 - ⇒ good pace within lessons
 - ⇒ teachers concentrating on intellectual development rather than social relationships
 - ⇒ freedom from outside disruption
- academic emphasis, including:
 - ⇒ high levels of student industry
 - ⇒ regular setting of homework and quality marking and feedback
 - ⇒ monitoring and support from senior staff
- continuous focus on achievement
 - ⇒ purposeful teaching
 - ⇒ effective organisation
 - ⇒ clarity of purpose

- ⇒ structure of lessons
- ⇒ a range of adaptable techniques

Learning and teaching are interactive. It is important that we teach pupils how to “learn to learn” in order to become independent learners and develop skills for lifelong learning.

Learning to Learn

It must be made explicit to pupils what they need to do to be successful in their learning. This includes:

- discussions with pupils about their learning
- explanations (by teacher, between pupils, by pupils to class)
- scaffolding (writing frames, wordbanks)
- modelling (shared writing, guided writing, sharing pupils’ work)

Learning objectives

If pupils are to take responsibility for their own learning, they need to know what they are expected to learn and how they can achieve it. Providing objectives allows pupils to engage with the process of learning.

1. Teachers must share the learning objective with the pupils. This will happen at the beginning of the lesson. In St Bede’s this is shared by:
 - being written on the whiteboard/interactive board
 - printed on sticky labels and put in books (Y1)
 - written by pupils in their books (Y2 upwards)
2. These objectives can be revisited throughout and at the end of the lesson. This can be done in a variety of ways:
 - pupils review their learning against the lesson objective
 - teacher questions
 - teacher recaps

The success criteria for the lesson is shared with the pupils at the beginning of the lesson or left blank for the class to create together. It is then revisited throughout the lesson and should also be differentiated to meet and challenge all learners. At the end of the lesson, the pupils use this as a checklist as to whether they have been successful in the lesson.

Differentiation

Within each classroom it will prove necessary to modify or extend the work to meet the needs of each pupil. We need to consider the effect of such factors as stimuli, grouping, support, resources, activities and outcomes when planning for all our pupils. We must be prepared to adapt and amend these aspects, as and where necessary, within the classroom situation. We recognise the importance of regular and consistent provision for pupils with special educational needs as well as extension and enrichment work for the more able pupils. Lessons are differentiated into waves of learning (see Inclusion Policy).

Teaching Styles

We feel that groupings within a classroom and across year groups should be varied. Individual work, group work (ability or mixed ability) and whole class sessions are equally important and valid in developing essential and varied skills such as independence, concentration, motivation, collaboration, negotiation and effective interaction. Planned group organisation that is well

monitored enhances the quality of pupils' learning. See inclusion codes which are used in teachers' planning to ensure a balanced range of teaching styles are used to deliver learning objectives.

Teaching Techniques

We adopt a variety of teaching techniques to facilitate pupils' learning ranging from direct teaching and instruction to exposition and investigation. We make effective use of questioning to both assess pupils' knowledge as well as to challenge their thinking. We also provide opportunities for consolidation and reinforcement so that pupils can feel secure and confident in their learning. We recognise the value of using outside agencies and experts to assist and enhance the teaching process. Such agencies can offer a range of knowledge, skills and expertise to support effective teaching and learning.

Good Learning Strategies

We strive to provide balanced and relevant learning experiences and opportunities so that all pupils can acquire the skills, understanding, attitudes and values needed to continue learning effectively throughout their school years. We believe that pupils learn through a wide variety of means:

- through investigations
- through first hand experiences
- through collaborative work
- through problem solving
- through demonstrations
- through discussions
- through talk partners
- through structured play
- by using and applying their knowledge and skills
- by having opportunities to practice and reinforce such knowledge and skills
- by evaluating their own work as well as that of others
- through plenary sessions

Equal Opportunities

Our commitment to equal opportunities is reflected in the aims of our school. We offer equal access for every pupil to all subject areas in line with the National Curriculum. Our planning and teaching actively reflects an awareness of age, gender, ethnicity and ability across the year groups.

We foster an ethos of mutual respect and esteem for everyone in our community. As a whole staff, we strive to provide positive role models for the pupils in our care.

Race Relations

We will promote racial equality and encourage, support and enable all pupils to reach their potential regardless of race or culture.

Special Educational Needs

A pupil has special educational needs if they have learning difficulties and need special help or if a pupil displays a higher level of understanding than would be the normal expectation. Pupils with special educational needs should, as far as it is practical, be educated along with other pupils. However, there will be times when reinforcement and consolidation work requires that the pupils work individually or in small groups (refer to Special Educational Needs Policy).

It is important to recognise that pupils can experience a range of personal, emotional and social problems that may affect their learning. Along with school support there are a variety of outside agencies e.g. Catholic Children's Society, Hearing Impaired Unit, etc, that can help the pupils to engage more fully in their own learning.

If a teacher has concerns about a pupil in the class and their ability to learn, then it is advisable to consult with other members of staff to seek advice and guidance and then the Inclusion Leader.

“A Catholic school should seek to plan a curriculum which embraces the needs of pupils of all abilities. The curriculum should be planned as an enabling framework to ensure that provision is made which is appropriate to the needs and gifts of each individual child”. (Evaluating the Distinctive Nature of a Catholic School).

Planning and Assessment

All teaching staff have 10% Planning, Preparation and Assessment time each week. Long term curriculum planning ensures coverage and balance within each year group as outlined in the Schemes of Work. Year group teachers and phase group teachers collaborate on a regular basis to ensure that the medium term planning provides both continuity and progression. Class teachers carry out short term planning to ensure that clear and focused teaching objectives and learning outcomes are being planned for and delivered on a weekly basis. It provides the framework through which pupils' progress and achievements can be monitored and evaluated. Assessment, in turn, provides valuable data and information for future planning. It is an essential cyclical process towards school improvement (refer to Assessment Policy).

Self and Peer Assessment

Self and peer assessment allows pupils to see what they are able to do in relation to the criteria set in the learning objective and the success criteria which should clearly be displayed and shared with pupils at some stage in the lesson. The learning objective establishes what the pupils should be able to do by the end of the lesson and the success criteria enables pupils to see the specifics which they should be focusing on in order to meet the learning objective and so be successful in that lesson.

Strategies used:

1. Target setting – each pupil across the school should have a EBI (even better if) target in Literacy and Mathematics which they can work on in order to improve. These targets are personal and every opportunity should be given to the pupil to ensure the target can be worked on.
2. Use of traffic lights/smiley faces to show understanding:
Red dot/sad face – lack of understanding/uncertainty about task
Orange dot/plain face – reasonable understanding/goal not fully achieved
Green dot/happy face – clear understanding/goal achieved

Involvement of Parents

We believe that parents are the primary educators of their pupils and we encourage them to participate in the learning process. We do this in a number of ways:

- Parents' Information Evenings/Workshops
- Parental Consultations
- New Parents' meetings and visits to classes by pupils about to start school
- Parent helpers in class
- Parent Advocates
- Home/School reading scheme

- Parents' Association meetings and events
- All staff willing and able to discuss issues with parents
- Headteacher's weekly newsletter
- Formal and informal surveys of parents
- School Dashboard
- Class assemblies, School Masses
- Curriculum information sheets
- Weekly newsletter in the Nursery
- Weekly newsletter in the first half-term for Reception
- Walk to school plan
- Parents' library box
- Parental skills audits
- Parent Workshops
- Parental questionnaires

We also provide end of year reports and test results to inform parents of their pupils' progress.

Parents are always welcome within the school. Parent helpers are encouraged to get involved in a wide variety of tasks throughout the school such as art and craft, cookery, reading groups, library work, educational trips and other activities. We always strive to match the talents and skills of the parents with suitable tasks and activities and in the most appropriate year group/key stage. All parent helpers need to be police checked.

Involvement of Governors

Governors have a vital role to play within the school and are intrinsic to our policy for teaching and learning.

Governors Role

- 1. Purposeful Leadership**
 - To support and encourage the Headteacher in school improvement process.
 - To encourage participation with staff and appropriate delegation.
- 2. Shared Vision and Goals.**
 - To participate in the vision of the school and setting goals.
 - To review and monitor the vision.
- 3. A Learning Environment**
 - To ensure the physical environment is conducive to learning.
- 4. Concentration on Teaching and Learning**
 - To visit school to observe and feedback to Governing Body
- 5. Purposeful Teaching**
 - To be a “critical” friend
- 6. High Expectations**
 - To emphasise governors support for high expectations for all.
 - To communicate to staff/parents
- 7. Positive Reinforcement**
 - To ensure this key part of the behaviour code
 - To feedback to staff and Headteacher on improvements.
- 8. Monitor Progress**
 - To ensure that the whole school and class progress is monitored regularly and evaluated.
 - To ensure action is taken
- 9. Pupil Rights and Responsibilities**
 - To encourage school to give responsibility to pupils
- 10. Home School Partnership**
 - To encourage parental involvement at A.G.M.
- 11. A Learning Organisation**
 - To allow time in the budget for staff development, staff consultation, leaders working with other staff
 - To encourage Headteacher to develop higher managerial and interpersonal skills through appropriate inset/support from borough.

Educational Visits/Community Links

We consider educational trips and visits to be an important and valuable aspect of a pupil’s learning. Such events provide our pupils with stimulating and essential practical experiences that can be utilised and further developed within the classroom.

Similarly we encourage links within our community. We enjoy links with our Community Police Liaison Officer, who promotes valuable discussions and debates within the classes. These sessions have a direct impact on the delivery of curricular issues. Whenever possible we participate in such community activities as Road Safety. We subscribe to a range of annual competitions. We support a wide variety of worthy charities and have strong links with the Parish and various local groups.

Success Criteria for Teaching and Learning

Clear learning objectives are shared in class by both teachers and pupils to promote high expectations and high levels of achievement.

Teaching areas are well organised and well resourced.

Teachers create an orderly and attractive working environment to enhance both teacher and pupil morale.

Teachers adopt a range of adaptable teaching and learning techniques to ensure effective learning. Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their pupils' learning, both at home and at school. Planning and assessment procedures are adhered to by all members of staff. All pupils have full access to a broad and balanced curriculum regardless of race, gender or ability.

Raising Achievement Across the Curriculum

Effective teachers will:-

- be firm but fair disciplinarians
- ensure that class rules are adhered to
- be able to challenge and motivate pupils of all abilities to produce their best
- be enthusiastic about learning
- have high expectations of pupils' capabilities
- plan, set and share clear objectives for each lesson with the pupils
- use a variety of teaching styles
- be aware of distinguishing between the various levels of achievement
- know when it is appropriate to use whole class teaching, group work, working in pairs or individual work
- ask effective questions at the beginning and end of whole class teaching
- ensure that pupils always leave the lesson with new knowledge, skills and/or understanding
- have a clear idea of pupils' progress
- manage the learning so pupils are always sure of what to do next
- provide informative feedback to pupils
- manage the time in lessons so that a goal is set and maintained
- use formative and summative assessment
- be an accurate and consistent marker
- ensure that pupils are not allowed to interfere with other pupils' learning
- set high quality homework that builds further on existing knowledge, skills and/or understanding

Classroom Management Guidelines

It is suggested that there should be in each classroom:

- a clearly marked book corner
- class rules clearly displayed
- equipment clearly labelled and available to pupils
- pupils' work books readily available
- guidance on approved playtime/dinner time activities allowed in the room
- access to computer equipment
- an emergency procedure notice

- interactive pupils' displays
- displays reflecting high standards of achievements and presentation
- guidance on what to do once pupils have completed their main tasks
- monitorial duties and rotas
- a weekly timetable

In addition, pupils should have clear knowledge of:

- what work they are doing
- the reason for learning, the time available and expected outcomes
- where resources are kept and what restrictions there are on their use
- how good behaviour is rewarded and poor behaviour punished
- what they are expected to do when they first enter the room
- what they may and may not do during wet break times
- what standards of work are expected
- What factors affect learning