

Teaching and Learning Policy

St Michael's Catholic Primary School

November 2011

This teaching and learning policy has been approved by the staff and Governors of St Michael's Catholic Primary School and will be reviewed annually. It aims to ensure that the children at our school are provided with high quality learning experiences that lead to a consistently high level of pupil achievement.

Children learn through their total experience. This policy guides what children do, what teachers do, how time is managed, the organisation of the classroom and what the school as an organisation does to create an effective and well-managed learning environment in which the individual needs of each child can be met.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

We believe that children learn best when they:

- are happy;
- are interested and motivated;
- achieve success and gain approval;
- are given tasks which match their ability;
- clearly understand the task;
- are confident, feel secure and are aware of boundaries;
- are challenged and stimulated.

The Learning Environment

This should be organised to ensure that children have the opportunity to:

- work individually, in groups and as a class;
- make decisions;
- work co-operatively;
- solve problems;
- be creative;
- discuss their ideas;
- develop social skills;
- develop independence;
- use initiative;
- receive support;
- achieve academically.

Learning takes place in an environment which:

- is challenging and stimulating;
- is peaceful and calm;
- is happy and caring;

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- is organised;
- is well resourced;
- makes learning accessible;
- is encouraging and appreciative;
- is welcoming;
- provides equal opportunities;
- provides a working atmosphere.

Children should be encouraged to develop organisational skills and independence through:

- appropriate tasks;
- confidence building;
- example;
- co-operation;
- provision of suitable opportunities;
- responsibilities.

Display

Display in the school should be used to create an attractive and stimulating environment. The work displayed should be of a high standard and use both 2D and 3D in a variety of media and be changed frequently. It should include work on different aspects of the curriculum and reflect the individual child's efforts as well as ability. Ideally, Mathematics and Science displays should stimulate discussion and be accompanied by children's questions and answers. Sometimes they can be 'interactive' which reflects our school focus on questioning, challenge and higher order thinking skills.

Routines and Rules

Routines and rules in the classroom contribute to a healthy learning environment. To be effective they should be:

- agreed by the children and clearly understood;
- fair and consistent;
- realistic and positive;
- daily activities with which the children are familiar.

All rules should result in the children knowing the boundaries of behaviour and should be set within the terms of The Behaviour Policy.

Achievement

Social, physical, creative and academic achievements are celebrated in many ways as an on going process in all aspects of school life, by:

- verbal or written praise by teachers, peers, Headteacher and parents;
- displays of work;
- opportunities to perform or share;
- encouraging self esteem;
- the awarding of stickers, house points and certificates;
- sharing success with the community in Praise assembly.

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Teachers at St Michael's arrange time to observe, assess, reflect and review achievements with each child on a regular basis. The children should be involved in this process by the encouragement of self appraisal and target setting. Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Approaches to Teaching

There must be a good balance of individual, group and whole-class teaching. Teachers choose carefully the style of teaching which is the most effective and groups will differ in composition and size for different activities. There may be several different activities in progress and at these times the teacher will be helping mainly one group or individual whilst the remainder will be involved in planned activities that do not require teacher input. It is important that while this is in progress children stay on task.

This can be helped by:

- having well organised and labelled resources;
- taking time to train children in procedures;
- making sure that children are aware of what they must do when they have completed an activity;
- making children aware that the teacher does not always have to be first in the line of contact. Other children, student teachers and parent helpers can be used.

Time Management

It is important that activities are well planned so that each child is working at their correct level, that they begin promptly and that the initial pace is maintained. All children should know what to do as soon as they enter the classroom and after they have completed an activity. A reminder list of tasks for individuals who have completed work ahead of the group is often helpful. Efficient planning and classroom organisation will significantly reduce time-wasting activities.

Supply Teachers

To ensure continuity, teachers should leave written guidance and suggested activities for all planned absences from the classroom. In the event of an unplanned absence a telephone call should be made to the supply teacher to discuss the children's work. The teacher's planning book will always be available showing lesson plans, timetables and curriculum documents.

School Policies

School policies are set out in the staff handbook and school policy file. It is the duty of each teacher to be familiar with school policies and to apply them.

Equal Opportunities

All children have the right to equal opportunities. Teachers' expectations of behaviour and performance by all children should be the same. Groups and activities should be mixed where possible. Particular care should be taken in the areas of Science, Mathematics, Technology and Physical activities. Teachers must ensure that the same children do not dominate in group work. All activities, including extra curricular

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activities at St Michael's Catholic Primary School are open to all children, numbers permitting.

Record Keeping

All teachers should keep detailed records of their work with the class and of individual children's activities and progress. The school has a policy for planning, assessment, recording and reporting of National Curriculum subjects that must be adhered to. Other records are left to the teacher's professional discretion.

PHYSICAL ORGANISATION

Furniture

All classrooms should have:-

Tables arranged for:

- ease of working;
- flexibility;
- purposeful discussion;
- provision of quiet corners;
- large working surfaces.

Chairs should normally:

- be sufficient in number for the activities in the classroom;
- leave enough room for children to move easily around the room.

Storage units arranged to:

- support different areas of the curriculum;
- support a project or activity;
- give character to a room;
- house children's personal belongings.

An annual inventory of furniture and a planned programme of renewal and decoration will be done in consultation with staff and governors.

No furniture is to be moved from classrooms without the permission of the Headteacher.

Resources

Materials in all areas should be well organised, be of good quality, be clean, tidy, attractive, accessible and well labelled. As far as possible materials should be near the appropriate working area. Stocks should be checked and replenished regularly.

Children should be taught and shown by example that resources are finite and that we all have a duty to care for equipment and not misuse, damage or waste it. Books and other equipment represent a considerable investment of money.

Relevant textbooks should be available in each classroom. Some sets of books, e.g. dictionaries, thesauri and atlases are purchased for specific classes and should not be removed.

The effective implementation of National Curriculum subjects calls for a wide range of equipment to be used. These do not necessarily have to be stored in the classroom.

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The school library and classroom libraries have a selection of books covering all curriculum subjects. There are also many outside sources for the loan of books, artefacts and equipment. It is important that equipment borrowed from outside sources and other classrooms is returned promptly and in good condition. Each classroom has supplies and an inventory of appropriate equipment, including computers, Maths apparatus, calculators, headphones, cassette players, television and video, etc. Teachers should be able to account for the use and location of this equipment. All missing, damaged or dangerous items should be reported to the Headteacher.

Resource Finance

Curriculum areas are allocated money according to the needs identified in the School Development Plan and the accompanying School Budget Plan. The Headteacher, Finance Officer and staff will discuss resource needs each half term and report back to the Governors. Requests for all equipment should be made to the Headteacher.

Mathematics, Science and Technology

Mathematics, Science and Technology have accessible and well-labelled areas for the storage of equipment. Teachers should check that the resources are appropriate for their groups and that consumable resources are renewed regularly. Teachers should also be aware of the safety aspects of all technology equipment.