

Heelands School

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

Introduction

Teaching and learning is the business of the whole school; teachers and support staff come to school to teach and pupils come to school to learn. At Heelands we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the idea that both adults and children learn new things every day. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone and aim to achieve this through the work we do.

Aims

At Heelands we are committed to:

- Improving the quality of teaching and learning through reflective practice and by making the best use of all resources available
- Providing a learning environment which is rich, varied, safe and happy in order for all of our pupils to achieve their full potential
- Raising levels of attainment across the curriculum
- Fostering a love for learning and so develop confident pupils with enquiring minds
- Ensuring equal opportunities in relation to gender, race, ability and religious belief
- Promoting a thoughtful, caring and responsible attitude towards the environment and beyond
- Facilitating positive relationships between all members of the school community

Ethos

The ethos of the school underpins the above aims. The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which will develop the skills and knowledge necessary for future learning. In the course of their daily work, all staff will contribute to the development of the ethos through:

- Providing and maintaining a calm and effective working environment
- Creating a welcoming environment where courtesy, kindness and respect are fostered as an expectation within the school
- Providing positive role models
- Maintaining purposeful and informative planning in line with the National Curriculum, Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum
- Valuing and celebrating children's achievements

Effective Teaching

Teaching time at Heelands is in line with Government recommendations and we aim to ensure that time is balanced across subjects to suit the needs and development of our pupils. Schools now have greater flexibility in the delivery of the curriculum as well as the time allocated to individual curriculum areas. In evaluating effective teaching, we have established certain criteria about what constitutes successful practice.

Planning

In order for teaching to be most effective, planning and preparation of lessons and related activities is a priority. In accordance with our philosophy we take a thematic approach to planning and ensure progression through our medium and long term planning. Medium term plans are drawn up based on the National Curriculum and EYFS guidance. Short term, weekly plans are then drawn from these documents. Detailed plans are written for each curriculum area, outlining the learning intention for each lesson, teacher exposition, differentiated activities, the resources required and a plenary. The role of support staff is highlighted on these plans. Staff evaluate lessons and make amendments as appropriate. Planning is clearly displayed in classrooms for staff and parents. Year group teams plan together so that parallel classes have the same learning experiences.

Differentiation

We recognise that children bring with them differing levels of experience and knowledge about school and the world around them. We therefore plan our work to ensure equality of access for all abilities. Teachers differentiate the curriculum principally by task, outcome or the level of adult support and differentiated tasks are detailed in weekly planning. This takes into account pupils who have been identified as 'more able and talented' as well as those pupils on the SEN register. Staff use their professional expertise and discretion in the identification of pupils who are deemed to be more able and talented. Pupils may have special musical talents in music, sport or the arts and we ensure that they are recognised, celebrated and developed further in their discrete areas. Names of pupils who are identified as being MAT, are held on a register and input from staff and/or home monitored.

Teaching and management strategies

As part of the day-to-day teaching process, with clearly established routines in place, staff ensure that they provide encouragement, praise and positive reinforcement. We expect high standards of both behaviour and work and provide opportunities for pupils to reflect. We make judgements and respond to individual need and intervene as appropriate in the learning process. During each lesson, the learning intention and success criteria are made clear in written form.

Each half-term the broader picture of the curriculum is made clear in a 'Next Steps' display so that pupils understand where the learning is leading and that progress can be easily tracked and measured. Children are reminded of targets that have been set in order to maximise their learning.

The success criteria for each lesson is made explicit to encourage pupils to assess whether targets have been reached. During the plenary sufficient time is allocated to evaluate and reflect on learning or to extend it where necessary. We recognise different styles and approaches need to be used in class in order to facilitate understanding, to add interest and motivate, but also to ensure the effective matching of tasks to needs. To this end, staff employ a variety of strategies:

- Whole class work
- Group work
- Paired work

- The outside curriculum
- Independent work
- Research and enquiry
- Investigation and problem solving
- Discussions, role play and oral presentations
- Use of technology across the curriculum
- Responding to visual/audio material
- Fieldwork and visiting places of educational interest
- Use of a range of communication strategies i.e. verbal and non-verbal
- Intervention groups

The learning environment

We believe that a stimulating environment, both inside and out, sets the climate for learning and plays a crucial role in the learning process. We use the outside areas whenever possible to enhance the curriculum. It is the responsibility of the classteacher to ensure that the classroom is effectively organised. Each class is equipped with basic resources and books appropriate to the age range. Specialist resources are stored in other areas of the school but are easily accessible to all and pupils are taught to use resources correctly and safely, with care and respect. Where possible, staff include resources which reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of the class population. Displays are changed at least once per term reflecting current topics and, where possible, include 3D displays. Staff create displays which cover all curriculum areas throughout the year and ensure that every child's work is displayed at some point. An exciting classroom promotes independence and high quality work by the children. Classrooms are tidy at the end of each working day and children are made aware of their role in this.

Assessment and record keeping

Regular assessments are made of pupils work in order to establish the level of understanding and attainment, and to inform future planning. Please refer to the Assessment policy for related procedures.

Effective learning

The learning environment is managed in such a way as to facilitate different learning styles, with particular regard to Special Educational Needs.

Learning processes:

Children enter school at different stages of development and learn at different rates of progress. In the course of learning, children develop their skills through a variety of processes. At Heelands, opportunities are organised to allow pupils to access these processes and for them to develop their own strategies to gain knowledge and skills. These include:

Investigation, experimentation, listening, asking questions/discussion, practical exploration and role play, imagining, problem-solving, decision-making

Learning styles:

At Heelands we acknowledge that pupils learn in different ways and we recognise the need to develop strategies that allow them to learn in ways that best suit them. For this reason it is necessary to incorporate as many styles as possible into our planning. The 8 learning styles, also known as areas of intelligence are:

- linguistic
- logical/mathematical
- visual/spatial
- kinaesthetic
- musical
- interpersonal/group working
- intrapersonal/reflective
- naturalistic

The teaching methods/strategies listed above relate to different learning styles. We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning and to be involved as much as possible in reviewing what they have learned.

Roles and responsibilities

Although teachers, support staff and pupils play the key roles in the process of teaching and learning, we recognise the roles that others, including those within the wider community, have in this process and would like to reinforce the partnership that should exist in order for all pupils to do their best.

Governors

It is the Governors role to monitor and review the policy and its practice through:

- Liaising with the relevant subject leader to assess teaching and learning in that curriculum area.
- Reporting to the full governing body via the curriculum sub-committee

Parents

Parents are encouraged to take an active role in their children's learning and to support them and the school by:

- Signing and adhering to the Home School Agreement
- Sharing with the teacher any problems the child may be experiencing which may affect their learning
- Supporting the school's Behaviour and Homework policies
- Responding to letters or any other form of contact from school
- Ensuring their child's attendance is of the highest level possible
- Ensuring their children are equipped for the school day

Pupils

Pupils can play a role in their own learning by:

- Behaving in line with the class code of conduct and the school's Behaviour policy
- Asking for help when needed whilst trying hard to work independently
- Reflecting on and evaluating their own learning when asked

The school

In partnership with all other stakeholders the school will:

- liaise with parents to facilitate transition into school and onto the next school
- maintain an 'open door' policy so parents feel able to discuss any issues or to offer support in the classroom
- hold Open Days and Parent Information meetings to inform parents about what we do in school and Parent Consultation meetings to report on individual progress
- inform parents/carers of any Government initiatives when appropriate
- produce curriculum plans on request
- maintain high expectations of standards of work
- set targets, mark pupils work appropriately and give them appropriate feedback

Monitoring and review

We review this policy annually in order to take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical school environment. This is a working document and is open to change and restructuring.

Signed:

Date reviewed by staff: September 1st 2016

Adopted by governors: January 2017