Ravensworth CE Primary School

Teaching and Learning Policy

Purposes

The purposes of this policy are to:-

- Promote and share understanding of what makes effective teaching and learning, and ensure pupil entitlement
- Promote the progress of all pupils
- Provide an agreed basis on which to evaluate effectiveness in teaching and learning and so inform the school's self-evaluation process
- Support continuous professional development
- Contribute to the effective delivery of performance management within the school
- Share good practice
- Influence the school's strategic plan for improvement by informing curriculum planning and design

The policy should be read in conjunction with the school's 'non-negotiables' and the document, 'How Learners Learn and Implications for Teaching' (attached)

Principles

The core principles for teaching and learning are:

- Set high expectations and give every learner confidence they can succeed
- Establish what learners already know and build on it
- Structure and pace the learning experience to make it challenging and enjoyable
- Inspire learning through a passion for the subject
- Make individuals active partners in their learning
- Develop learning skills and personal qualities

Effective teaching and learning

Ravensworth CE Primary School recognises that teaching is most effective when teachers:-

- Demonstrate good subject knowledge and understanding in the way they present and discuss a subject
- Are technically competent in teaching skills
- Challenge and inspire pupils, expecting the most of them, so as to deepen their knowledge and understanding
- Use methods, approaches and styles which enable all pupils to learn effectively
- Manage pupils well and secure high standards of behaviour
- Use time, support staff and other resources, especially ICT, effectively
- Assess pupils' work thoroughly and use assessments including observation, Assessment for Learning 'I Can' statements, success criteria and Target Tracker curriculum statements
- Help and encourage pupils to progress and involve them in understanding their 'next steps' and targets
- Use assessment evidence to plan effectively, setting appropriate objectives that pupils understand
- Use home/school liaison effectively to reinforce and/or extend what is learned in school

All teachers are entitled to:-

- Regular evaluation of their work
- Feedback on their effectiveness
- Professional development opportunities which support their continuing effectiveness and the needs of our school and community

Ravensworth Primary School recognises that learning is most effective when learners:-

- Are engaged, appropriately challenged and extended
- Acquire new knowledge, skills, concepts and attitudes, develop ideas and increase their understanding
- Are motivated to work to the best of their ability
- Show interest in their work and sustain concentration
- Develop independent learning strategies
- Understand what they are doing well, how well they have done and how they could improve
- Make good progress

All pupils are entitled to:-

- Effective teaching
- Feedback on their progress
- Clear targets for improvement
- Advice and support

Evaluating our effectiveness

The above criteria form the basis for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and learning at Ravensworth Primary School. We recognise that teaching should always be evaluated in terms of its impact on pupils' learning and what makes it successful and that learning should only be evaluated as effective when it secures good progress for all pupils.

Teaching and learning will be evaluated through:

- Planning
- Assessment records and assessment for learning
- Classroom observation
- Classroom 'walkabouts'
- Data analysis
- Work scrutiny
- Pupil interviews
- Staff interviews
- Parent consultations

Securing consistency

The performance of all teachers will be evaluated against whole-school agreed criteria. The responsibility for monitoring teachers will be that of the subject leaders and headteacher. The accuracy of judgements will be monitored and moderated by

- LA Adviser/EDA visits
- OFSTED Inspections
- Whole staff self-evaluations

All individually agreed performance targets will be monitored by the headteacher.

Contribution to school and teacher self-evaluation

Good teaching and learning are at the heart of an effective school. Information gathered through our evaluation will be used to improve the school by:-
- Providing feedback to staff on their performance
- Securing appropriate professional development opportunities in line with the teachers' and school needs
- Sharing good practice
- Influencing the school's strategic plan for improvement and informing curriculum planning and design

Contribution to performance management

The performance management cycle focuses on assessment of teaching and analysis of pupils' learning to guide the setting of targets for improvement. Information gathered through classroom observation will therefore guide the professional development of the teacher, inform the school development plan and contribute to the effective delivery of performance within the school.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review of the Policy

The operation of the policy will be monitored and its success evaluated by the headteacher and governing body. An annual review of the effectiveness of the policy will be carried out involving all staff.

Ravensworth non-negotiables

At Ravensworth CE Primary School our classroom practice is based these non-negotiables:

Classroom Environment

- Calm and purposeful classroom; classroom ethos of high expectations of learning and behaviour, mutual respect, courtesy and co-operation
- School Values displayed and referred to when necessary
- Highly stimulating resources, including ICT, used to provide quality learning experiences
- Tidy, free of unnecessary clutter; children able to self-select and encouraged to play their part in keeping the classroom tidy. Resources that are not being used to be put away in stock cupboards or the resources room
- Flexibility in the organisation of furniture e.g. role play area; arrangement of tables for pair, group and class activities
- Displays of a high standard used to reflect models of good work, Christian ethos, cultural diversity or an interactive element.
    - A range of display types – 'semi-permanent' assistive displays (e.g. punctuation pyramids, times tables etc.) alongside dynamic / evolving displays.
        - Semi-permanent displays should be laminated and be colourful, high quality and *regularly used in teaching and learning*.
        - Evolving displays (e.g. number challenges, learning journeys, words of the week etc.) should not be scruffy, and should be changed each week (or, at most, each fortnight). Specific areas (simmering pots) may be used for collecting pupil thoughts or as 'holding' ideas.
    - Literacy and numeracy learning walls in use, with curriculum targets displayed.
    - Classrooms should feature models of good work to inspire pupils & raise self-esteem.
- Self-selectable SEN resources should be in evidence in line with Wave 1 Provision (e.g. reading overlays, Thrass charts, spelling dictionaries, pencil grips etc.)

Support staff/students/helpers

- Ensure all are aware of the outline of the lesson/s, their role, planning, learning objectives and assessments
- Should be involved in assessment e.g. checking understanding and charting progress of individuals/a group during whole class input from teacher, recording progress in all lessons where they are working with a focus group etc.

Weekly

- Keep children up to date with a 'briefing' covering main events for the forthcoming week- differentiated as appropriate for younger children
- Reminder of expected learning behaviours/attitudes e.g. listening skills
- Create time to share pupils' personal interests/experiences/celebrate birthdays etc.

In a lesson

- Maximise opportunities for pupil involvement (avoid unnecessary 'teacher talk')
- Differentiated tasks and questioning; ensure SEN pupils are challenged and supported
- Reminder of literacy and/or numeracy targets/skills in all lessons
- Lesson objective and assessment criteria shared and used as title where appropriate
- Reminder of which skills the children will be using e.g. listening, thinking, talking etc.
- Pupil self-assessment- traffic lights in books/smiley faces/ visual thumbs up or similar
- Regular review and recap throughout and at the end of the lesson to systematically check pupils' understanding throughout; intervene, support and adapt lesson when necessary
- Formative assessment used to reflect and inform the next session

How Learners Learn and Implications for Teaching

When the brain learns

The brain learns when it is trying to make sense. When it is building on what it already knows, when it recognises the significance of what it is doing: when it is working in complex, multiple perspectives.

Implications –
• Multi-sensory activities promote learning
• The learning environment must be stimulating
• Learning takes place when learners have to think
• Learning takes place without instruction and is accelerated by direct teaching and the creation of situations that promote learning
• Play provides excellent conditions in which the brain learns
• Closed questioning inhibits learning, open questions promote learning
• New knowledge must be related to what is already known
• Significance is important – the purpose of lessons must be established by the teacher

Calibration

Learners learn through a process of first being exposed to new knowledge and then attempting to make sense of that new knowledge in terms of their existing knowledge. This is calibration.

Implications -
• The link between new and old knowledge must be established by the teacher
• We need to refer to existing knowledge before introducing new knowledge – at the beginning of a lesson
• Back reference when assisting pupils to make sense of new knowledge

Scaffolding

• For calibration to take place the teacher must scaffold for the learner – provide appropriate frames of reference or structures. These are selected on the basis of goodness of fit with the pupils existing knowledge and cognitive structures.

Implications -
• To scaffold we lead learners through activities or responses by providing steps or clues based on the learners existing knowledge
• This involves back-referencing
• These opportunities to correct misconceptions occur very frequently in questioning situations

ZPD – important for direct teacher assisted learning

• Learning takes place in the zone of proximal development – the gap that exists between the pupils' performance without assistance and performance with assistance. The components of assisted performance are internalised becoming the learners' performance.

Implications -
• Judging where to pitch work is very important
• Not far enough ahead – little/slow progress
• Too far ahead, no connection with the new knowledge - little progress
• Independent work should be close to existing knowledge
• Teacher led work should be further from existing knowledge
• Tasks must be challenging but achievable with effort
• The understanding and development of spoken language in assisted learning is of extreme importance

<u>High challenge – low stress</u>
• Learning takes place in a challenging but non-threatening, supportive environment. The optimal mental state is relaxed alertness – high challenge and low stress.

Implications –
• Work needs to be challenging
• Learners should not be afraid of making mistakes
• The social environment must be 'friendly' – no put-downs
• Pupils must feel safe – physically and mentally
• Social rules must be established and consistently maintained at the school and classroom level

<u>Relevance</u>
• Learners need to feel that what is being taught is relevant to their own purposes. This relates to metacognition, the process of being aware of and in control of one's own knowledge and thinking. Learners control their own learning and in order to reflect on the meaning of what they are learning they must be committed to it.

Implications -
• We must establish with pupils why something is being taught and its benefits
• Time needs to be allowed for reflection
• An Assessment for Learning process/approach in lessons improves metacognition and aids learning – establish relevance, criteria and what success looks like; use higher order questions; give specific feedback; enable self and peer assessment

<u>Intelligence</u>
• Learners have the capacity to develop at least 8 types of intelligence. Whilst learners may show differing aptitudes in each type they are mutually supportive of each other.

The intelligences 8 are:
• Linguistic - language
• Logical -mathematical –number and logic
• Spatial – pictures and images
• Musical – tone, timbre and rhythm
• Kinaesthetic – whole body and hands
• Interpersonal – social understanding
• Intrapersonal – self-knowledge [emotional intelligence]
• Natural – nature

Implications –
• Pupils have a range of abilities and these can be improved
• The curriculum needs to be broad
• Abilities can be fostered outside their 'subject'
• A multi-sensory approach should be fostered
• All aspects of our curriculum must be afforded high status

<u>Emotional Intelligence</u>
• Emotional Intelligence, the need to become emotionally literate is vital. Learning takes place through the senses as well as the mind. It happens by reflecting and analysing real experience, making connections between new and old experiences, making choices and making decisions that involve feelings and emotions as well as intellect and reason.

Implications –
• Emotional intelligence should be taught in a structured manner throughout the school
• It can become embedded through discussion time
• We should provide a curriculum where pupils making decisions and choices is common
• Give time for reflection during lessons

Learning Styles
• Different learners have differing preferences of learning style. Some are mainly visual learners, others auditory and still others kinaesthetic. Teachers need to be aware of the preferences and cater for all within their teaching.

Implications –
• We need to establish pupils' learning preferences
• Appeal to all learning styles in our teaching
• Employ a balance of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activity in our teaching
• We must seek to improve learners ability to learn in their weaker styles

Expectations
• Teachers' expectations have a powerful positive or negative effect on learning. Low expectations result in underachievement. With high expectations the opposite happens – it builds confidence and self-esteem, a 'can do' attitude, and there is the greater likelihood of success.

Implications -
• How we view learners and how they think we view them can have a profound effect on their learning
• We must have and portray high expectations of all pupils
• Pupils must be expected to succeed

Self-esteem
• Learning involves taking risks. Learners need to have adequate self-esteem and confidence to feel comfortable about taking such risks. Learners whose self-esteem is eroded by negative feedback and adverse comments learn not to try. Self-esteem is promoted when challenging tasks requiring effort are completed successfully.

Implications –
• Good self-esteem is essential if pupils are going to fulfil their potential
• We need to actively promote self-esteem through emotional intelligence work and the social environment we establish in classrooms
• We must not allow negative feed-back and adverse comments to undermine self-esteem
• Tasks must be challenging but achievable with effort

Motivation
• Motivated learners learn more. Learning activities must hold interest for the learner. Learning needs to be enjoyable and seen as worthwhile.

Implications -
• Activities we give must motivate learners
• Learning should be an enjoyable activity
• At the very least pupils should be motivated by the benefits they gain from the learning activity
• Where possible we should actively involve pupils in planning work activities
• We must promote a positive - learning orientation; belief that effort leads to success, belief in one's ability to improve & learn, preference for challenging tasks, satisfaction from personal success & difficult tasks , problem solving & self-instructions when engaged in task
We must avoid and discourage a negative performance orientation; belief that ability leads to

success, concern to be judged as able, especially to perform, satisfaction from doing better than others, emphasis on competition, public evaluation, helplessness, negative self-evaluation when a task is difficult

Memory
•Memorisation for its own sake is a very difficult proposition made easier if learners have a purpose for committing it to memory. This can be achieved by a frequent need for use or by introducing activities in the form of games etc. Memory is also aided if the aspect to be memorised is frequently revisited in short spells rather than long spells of learning with long time spans between

Implications -
• Memory of facts is very important
• Things to be memorised must be encountered often
• They must be introduced in novel/different ways using the full range of Visual, Auditory and Kinaesthetic (VAK) styles
• They need to be of obvious use
• A range of specific memory techniques must be taught

Habits
• Both good and bad habits are learnt and difficult to change. Learners need to be taught good habits and these constantly reinforced. Established bad habits are difficult to change.

Implications -
• Good habits must be constantly reinforced and not taken for granted
• We must watch out for bad habits in learners and never accept them
• We need to establish accepted good habits – working routines, good presentation, etc.