



## PRIORY INFANT SCHOOL

### TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

#### **Aims of this document:**

- To provide a clear statement of our principles and practices of teaching and learning at Priory Infant School
- To represent our agreed view of how we support and encourage learning.
- A consistent framework to enable teachers and teaching assistants to be confident in developing their own practice to help children learn.
- To show the emphasis we put on the school as a learning environment – for children, teachers, support staff, parents and other stakeholders.

#### **Principles:**

- Our policy is to enable children to have a growth mindset and become independent, confident, lifelong learners.
- We want our children to feel confident to try, be willing to challenge themselves and know that it's ok to make mistakes and learn from them.
- We want our children to develop skills to work co-operatively with others via group work and learning partners – to be able to communicate and share ideas, to be supportive and be supported
- We want our children to know that they can get better at learning by understanding the key elements of what learning is (the Super Learning Powers- see appendix A)
- We want our children to develop self esteem and a sense of achievement through learning by praising their progress, perseverance and work ethos at every opportunity
- We know that children learn in different ways and therefore we will teach using a variety of styles and resources matched to the needs of the children
- We strongly believe that our children have an entitlement to outstanding teaching
- We know that all children need to work at their own level and we will provide differentiated work to meet the specific needs and interests of individuals and give opportunities children to select their own level of challenge
- We believe that each child has an entitlement to learn which should have regard to gender, culture, social background and ability or disability to ensure equality of opportunity

#### **How do we ensure that our children experience a variety of learning tasks and styles?**

- We consistently use formative assessment strategies across the school as described in Shirley Clarke's book: Outstanding Formative Assessment – Culture and Practice (2014)
- We ensure that children have experience of working in a variety of groups – ability groups, mixed ability groups, age groups, learning partner pairs, whole class, one to one.
- We provide a good range of effective and high quality resources in each curriculum area which are regularly audited and updated
- We offer different levels of challenge wherever possible by task, support, resources or outcome
- We provide fulltime class based TA support for the benefit of all children as well as specialist TA support for children with SEN/AEN needs.

## What do we want our pupils to learn?

- Learning is about knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes.
- All school curriculum areas have policies which should be referred to
- The school ensures that National Curriculum and Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum requirements are fulfilled
- The school has developed an RE scheme from the Kent Agreed Syllabus for RE

## How do we plan for learning?

- We plan to ensure coverage of the EYFS and NC requirements and to ensure continuity, pace and progression from Yr R to Year 2
- We plan in a number of stages:
  - **Long term planning:** Using the National Curriculum programmes of study and End of Year expectations for each year group to ensure coverage of the key objectives in each curriculum area in each year group
  - **Medium term planning:** detailed schemes of work that directly relate to the NC programmes of study planned in topic themes, with clear identification expectations and assessment criteria.
  - **Short term planning:** this is done weekly during PPA and daily in the form of a day plan – taken directly from medium term plans – includes clear differentiation, links to children’s learning targets in literacy and maths, learning objectives and success criteria, resources, adult support and role, grouping arrangements and assessment opportunities. Teachers plan and evaluate with their year group partner and as needed with the relevant subject co-ordinator.
- **Tracking progress in learning against national expectations** is ongoing and children are assessed termly against the expectations for their year group in Reading, Writing and Maths and at end of year in all other subject areas. Children are assessed as being “on track” or “not on track” and a points system awarded based upon Kent’s Assessment Manager AWL tracking programme. The Foundation Stage Profile is used in Year R and the school is using the Early Excellence baseline assessment scheme. “Next steps” targets are shared with children and used in planning to ensure that children make **good** progress of 6 points progress per year from their starting point. Information and targets are shared with parents in October and February.
- **Teachers report** to the Inclusion Manager and Headteacher 5 times a year on the progress made by individual children and tracking ensures that individuals or groups who are not making the required progress are identified early and support strategies are put into place.
- **Feedback guidelines** give clear expectations about the most effective ways to give children feedback and set the standard for marking diagnostically in order to further the children’s learning (see feedback policy)

## How do we deliver effective lessons?

- Learning objectives are identified for each lesson for each group or task. These are shared with the children during the lesson.
- Year 1 and 2 children have their group targets for reading, writing and maths displayed in the classroom so that they know and can refer to them as they work
- Success criteria are generated with children during the lesson wherever possible so that they understand what they need to do to show their learning and achievement of the targets
- We encourage all children to “have a go” and have a clearly developed ethos of working hard and not giving up – the children are taught that persevering with something that is difficult will make them a better learner

- Learning activities are differentiated by task, support, resources, time or outcome in order to meet the needs of all children while still providing challenge and success.
- Teachers use the physical environment imaginatively and flexibly to provide the best opportunities for learning – eg. small groups in the quiet area, use of outside space.
- Teachers have high expectations of children’s learning and seek to provide stimulating, enjoyable, well paced experiences to motivate and inspire children.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning is rigorous. The Head and Deputy regularly monitor the core subjects. Subject co-ordinators also monitor (sometimes jointly) lessons in their subject. Work scrutiny happens every term. Feedback and points for development are always shared with individuals and then followed up in a specified time scale. General findings and areas for development are shared with all staff. Peer to peer monitoring and self evaluation using filmed lessons is also used on a regular basis so that individuals can develop their practice.

### **How do we group our pupils for learning?**

- We recognise that different grouping arrangements are appropriate for different tasks and pupils. Grouping is intended to meet the learning needs of children and still be flexible. As a result children work in different groups in their class according to the learning objectives of the lesson. Groupings could be ability or mixed ability based, friendship based or interest based.
- Class based TAs and the teacher ensure that they work closely with a specified group of children during every lesson – and that they work with different groups so that all children have equal access to adult support and small group teaching
- Class based TAs will also work with intervention groups within the classroom at specified times to deliver “extra” programmes of work , SLT, FMC, social skills programmes etc .
- Some children identified as SEN or needing intervention are withdrawn from the class either as individuals or in small groups at certain times to work with a specialist TA eg. SLT, OT / Fizzy , Reading and Writing Support, counselling, social skills. This is co-ordinated between Inclusion Manager and class teacher and parents are kept informed by means of a provision plan.

### **How do we use Teaching Assistants to support our children’s learning?**

- Teaching Assistants at Priory Infant School are seen as a valued and skilled part of the teaching team. They have good access to training and development opportunities and a wide range of CPD is taken up.
- They are well informed about the learning that goes on in class on a day to day basis because the teachers give them clear and detailed day plans to follow.
- Communication between teachers and TAs is very good – liaison time is planned in at least once a week when teachers and TAs meet to discuss planning, assessment and individual children’s needs.
- TAs in class to work with all the children – they will be asked to support different groups or individuals as is appropriate to the lesson objective, they do support the SEN children but that is not their only role.
- TAs in classes are aware of the range of different abilities within the class and the expectations and targets that each group is working on.
- TAs have access to IEPs of SEN children within the class to help them achieve their IEP targets
- Specialist TAs (OT/Fizzy, ICT, Reading Support, Behaviour and Medical, SLT) withdraw some children from class as specified on the class provision plan. They contribute to planning activities and objectives, reviewing IEPs and giving feedback and information to Inclusion Manager and outside agencies, class teacher and parents.

- At Priory Infant School we know that ALL adults within the school contribute to children’s learning. These include midday meals supervisors, admin staff, the site manager, students and voluntary helpers. Where possible all adults are used as good role models for learning – eg. the site manager showing groups of children how to put together some new furniture for the school library as part of a “people who help us” topic.
- All parent helpers and volunteers in school have guidelines to read and adhere to and undergo an induction with the Deputy Head before starting to help in class. The teachers ensure that they plan suitable activities for each volunteer, building on their strengths and interests in order to get the best out of them.

### **How do we help parents to support their children’s learning?**

- “Working together” - in partnership with parents is a key part of Priory Infant School’s ethos.
- We believe that to improve children’s life chances and develop the capacity for lifelong learning the school must work with and help parents and carers to be positive and confident about helping their children to learn.
- Parents are welcomed into school and the school actively seeks to involve parents by holding coffee mornings, curriculum workshops, information meetings, open afternoons, meet the teacher sessions, class assemblies, exhibitions and videos of special events, encouraging parents to help in class or on school visits, special assemblies and performances.
- At the first “pre school interview” before their child starts school the Year R teacher will spend time talking to each parent about the importance of their role in their child’s learning and will ask the parent to sign a “Home School Contract”
- Parents are asked to support their child with their homework from Reception – Y2.
- Curriculum information newsletters for each year group are sent home at the start of each term.
- “What we are learning this week” notices and timetables are displayed in the “Parent Information Window” in each class.
- “Daily” boards are used in Reception for parents to see at the beginning of each day what the children will be learning.
- Parents are given many opportunities to attend meetings and workshops in school to find out more about the curriculum. Every year parents are invited to: Year R reading information meeting, SoundsWrite (phonic) workshops, maths workshops, SATs information meeting, creative play workshops. Most are offered in morning, afternoon and evening to allow the majority of parents to attend. Parents are encouraged to evaluate these sessions and are consulted on preferences for future sessions.
- Parents are able to look at their child’s work and are informed of their progress, levels and targets at Open Evenings in October and February. In July parents are invited to an Open Afternoon to see their child’s latest work and have an opportunity to talk informally with the teacher and TA, they can discuss their child’s detailed written report and visit their child’s new class and teacher.
- Views of parents are sought regularly via the PINs weekly newsletter, surveys and questionnaires, working parties and the PTFA. Responses are always acted upon and information about results fed back.

### **How do we organise learning resources?**

- Each class has a core base of resources and an annual class budget enables teachers to keep these up to date and relevant.
- Labelling of resources in classrooms is consistent across the school and designed to allow the children to be as independent as possible within the classroom.

- All subject and area leaders “bid” annually for a resources budget based upon the priorities identified in the SIP, subject audit and staff meeting curriculum reviews.
- Some resources are stored centrally (eg. music, maths , science) and are audited annually by the subject co-ordinator, stored and catalogued related to the topics in each year group for ease of access.
- The library, hall and ICT suite are timetabled to ensure each class has equal access. Each class makes use of the wildlife and gardening areas during relevant topic work and also to notice seasonal changes.
- A designated TA is responsible for stock auditing and ordering and another TA is designated for photocopying, laminating and resource making.
- A dedicated TA is responsible for ICT equipment and teaches groups and helps with lessons in the ICT suite.
- All classes have an interactive whiteboard and at least 3 networked computers and printer facilities. The school has a bank of 12 ipads which are available to borrow to use in class

### **How do we use our school environment to support our children’s learning?**

- Displays are a very important learning resource. They are planned both in classrooms and around the school to provide additional learning opportunities as well as to celebrate children’s work and achievements.
- Displays and photographs around the school celebrate the growth mindset ethos and reinforce the Super Learning Powers and Golden Rules.
- The Library and ICT suite are used by all year groups on a timetabled basis.
- The OT room and SLT room are used by dedicated specialist TAs to take small groups and individuals with SEN for programmes of work relating to their particular needs.
- The Wildlife Pond Area provides a wide range of opportunities for children to observe and record the natural world. Each year group uses the wildlife area in a specific way, planned into topic work across the year to ensure progression. Eg. Year R have explored the wildlife area using all their senses during a “Teddy Bears Picnic” in the Autumn and then “Look for signs of Spring” later in the year. Year 2 collect and investigate minibeasts and take part in pond dipping.
- The Vegetable Garden and outside tubs are used in Spring and Summer for each class to grow vegetables from seed, tend and observe their progress. The veg is then collected and used as part of the school’s Harvest Festival in September.
- The children in Year 1 and 2 have special playground toys and equipment which are used during lunch and playtimes to promote group games, physical skills and social skills eg. skipping ropes, giant connect 4, ten pin bowls, board games. Designated playground helpers are responsible for the toys – with each child in Year 2 getting a turn to be a helper on a rota system.
- In Reception adaptations have been made to the smaller playgrounds and the garden area to make an excellent outdoor learning space where children can access a wide range of curriculum activities whilst outside. Adults are carefully planned in to work and play with the children outside on directed activities. The outdoor learning space is open throughout the year, children are provided with waterproof all-in-one suits as needed.
- The local community and area also provide an excellent teaching resource. All classes use the locality of the school to enhance the learning of pupils through carefully planned topic work. Eg. Year 2 explore the history of Ramsgate Harbour and visit Ramsgate Tunnels and Turner Contemporary. Year 1 visit the local church and synagogue, shops and a smallholding. Year R join in sports’ day and have a picnic on the beach.

## **How do we know what our children have learned?**

(See Assessment Policy and Guidelines)

- Assessment *of* learning and assessment *for* learning are at the core of what we do.
- The school focuses upon what the children know and can do and what they need to learn next. The “next steps” approach is consistent across the school.
- Teachers use detailed expectations for each year group each term in reading writing and maths to show which children are on track and what they need to learn to stay on track. This is tracked 5 x a year by HT and Inclusion Manager. All teachers have high expectations that all children will make 6 points progress in a year. Any children not on track to make this much progress are highlighted and extra support is planned.
- Children’s progress is regularly assessed and recorded in a wide variety of ways – including planned assessment tasks, observations, adult led activities, use of past SATs materials for moderation purposes.
- In Year R teachers use the Early Excellence Baseline on entry. From the end of term 1 the child’s achievements are recorded using the Foundation Stage Profile.
- All foundation subjects are assessed using end of year expectation criteria. At the end of Year 1 and Year 2 the teachers make a “best fit” judgement for each child.
- Teachers use very clear feedback guidelines to inform the children, parents and colleagues about what the child can do and needs to learn next.

## **What extra curricular learning opportunities do we provide?**

- There are opportunities for children to take part in the following clubs which are either held at lunchtimes or directly after school throughout the year – this is the range of clubs offered during the past 2 years:
  - Musical Theatre Club
  - Singing club
  - Art and Craft club
  - Story club
  - Games club
  - Football club
  - Cricket club
  - Ballet club
  - Yoga for children
  - Dance Club
  - School Council
  - Playtime and lunchtime helpers
  - Learning through Play parent and child workshops
  - Maths with your Child parent and child workshops

## **Equal Opportunities**

- Priory Infant School has a comprehensive Equality Statement. We actively promote equality of opportunity - taking into account race, faith, gender and disability.

- The school audits resources regularly to ensure that we provide a wide range of positive images and resources which reflect today's society and promote a good understanding of different people's strengths and needs in an appropriate way for young children to understand.
- We have a detailed 3 year Equality and Accessibility Plan which shows how we offer equality of opportunity in all areas of school life for pupils and families with disabilities.

Policy written by Tracey Jones

Next review: 2018

## ***Appendix A***

### **“The Super Learning Powers”**

- Concentrate
- Have a go
- Don't give up
- Keep improving
- Use your imagination
- Be co-operative
- Be curious
- Enjoy learning