



Four Marks CE Primary School Teaching & Learning Policy

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Introduction

At Four Marks CE Primary School we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the idea that both adults and children learn new things every day, experiencing success and struggle along the way to develop a resilience and passion for learning.

We maintain that learning should be a challenging but rewarding experience for everyone.

Through our teaching we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives.

Aims and objectives

We believe that people learn best in different ways. At our school we provide a rich and varied learning environment and a rich and extended curriculum that allows children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential.

This includes the use of problem solving, investigation, use of open questions and tasks, competition and a wide range of higher order thinking skills delivered through a creative curriculum.

This also includes developing attributes which are good for society (pro-social), based on our school values (Love, Integrity, Forgiveness and Equality), and another set which are important for learning (epistemic), based on our learning values (Responsible, evaluative, accurate, collaborative, hard-working, inquisitive & imaginative, nimble-minded, and 'gritty').

Through our teaching we aim to:

- enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners;
- foster children's self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with other people;
- develop children's self-respect and encourage children to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others;
- show respect for all cultures and faiths, in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people;
- enable children to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this community;
- enable children to share their wider skills with others, and take increasing amounts of responsibility for our school community
- help children grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens.
- Enable the children to master the curriculum objectives for the relevant year.
- Provide challenge and stimulation through:
 - the use problem solving, investigation, use of open questions and tasks, competition and a wide range of higher order thinking skills
 - encouraging questioning, seeking alternative answers, hypothesizing, applying knowledge to different situations and contexts, or requiring a deeper level of reasoning
 - making full use of skills and abilities through team work, display work, competition
- Set challenging goals, given the different starting points of children so that all pupils deepen their knowledge, skills and understanding
- Enable children to develop, consider and articulate the habits and attributes of highly effective learners identified below:

Prosocial (LIFE)		Epistemic (REACHING)	
Love	- Generous (not greedy) - Kind (not callous) - Convivial (not egotistical)	Responsible	- Conscientious - Trustworthy - In control of their learning and effort
		Evaluative	- Questioning (not credulous) - Able to use evidence to back up ideas - Able to weigh up different evidence and viewpoints. - Able to consider whether their own/ others work can be better.
Integrity	- Trustworthy (not deceitful) - Morally brave (not apathetic)	Ambitious	- Determined - Competitive but respectful
		Collaborative	Collaborative (not selfish)
Forgiveness	Forgiving (not vindictive)	Hard-working	Giving their best effort (not lazy)
		Independent	- Willing to help myself - Able to use initiative to solve problems or difficulties.
Equality	- Tolerant (not bigoted) - Ecological (not rapacious)	Nimble-minded	- Able to link ideas from previous learning and experiences to new - Open to new ideas - Able to change mind in the face of new ideas or evidence (not stubborn) - Able to generate different possibilities
		'Gritty'	- Resilient (not easily defeated) - Able to keep going through the learning struggle. - Persevere especially when things are difficult or less enjoyable. - Able to take sensible risks and 'have a go'. - Able to try new things.

Effective learning

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to develop a range of strategies to cater for different learning preferences. We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn and what can enhance or restrict their learning.

Effective teaching

When teaching, we focus on motivating the children and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. We base our teaching on our knowledge and assessment of the children's depth of understanding. Our prime focus is to develop and deepen the knowledge, understanding and skills of each child.

We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's cognitive ability and security of understanding, whether this involves further consolidation and concrete work for children not yet independently secure with a concept, or moving a child towards abstract application of their prior understanding. When planning work for children with special educational needs we give due regard to information and targets contained in the children's Individual Education Plans (IEPs). We have high expectations of all children, and we want them all to achieve to their highest potential. Teachers modify and

annotate planning, teaching and learning as appropriate in relation to IEPs, early stage English speakers, and needs of the pupils with particular aptitudes and talents.

We set challenging academic targets for all children across the year, based on their starting points. We continuously review the progress of each child and regularly adjust their targets and think about alternative provision to help children meet their targets, at appropriate times.

We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives and success criteria. We take these objectives from the National Curriculum. Our planning contains information about the tasks to be set, the resources needed, and the way we assess the children's progress and understanding. We evaluate all lessons so that we can modify and improve our teaching in the future.

Assessment exists to help the teachers to help the child. It ensures more effective learning by providing the evidence for closer matching of tasks to the child's needs. It helps us identify future planning and teaching strategies. Teachers make ongoing assessments both through tests and teacher assessments throughout the year. This information is used to identify 'target children' for intervention and support and help plan lessons. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge and skills of all our children.

We use these strategies to link assessment to better teaching and learning:

- Teachers enter performance data into our Tracking Program
- Use of data from formal and formative assessment to inform and adjust planning and targeting
- Improvement time –pupils are given back written work which has been highlight marked and includes an 'improvement prompt.'
- Pupil progress in the EYFS is tracked using our tracking program and profile observations and parent review meetings.
- Teachers complete termly assessments in reading, writing and mathematics and end of unit assessments in RE, Science and Topic. Assessments are regularly updated and gap analysis and judgments are used to inform teaching, learning and provision.

Our teachers establish good working relationships with all children in the class. We treat the children with kindness and respect, but have high expectations that children will give their best effort. We treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in all class activities. All our teachers follow the school policy with regard to discipline and classroom management. We set and agree with children the class code of conduct. We expect all children to comply with these rules that we jointly devise to promote the best learning opportunities for all. We praise children for their efforts and we help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. We insist on good order and behaviour at all times. When children misbehave we follow the guidelines for sanctions as outlined in our Positive Behaviour Policy.

Teaching assistants and other adult helpers are used as effectively as possible to enhance teaching and learning. This also includes utilising the expertise and enthusiasm of our staff and volunteers in providing enrichment opportunities for the children as part of our wider curriculum offer (e.g. gardening, coding, engineering, sewing, gymnastics).

Our classrooms are attractive learning environments: We use working walls to support children's reasoning, thinking and learning. We change displays regularly to ensure that the classroom reflects the topics studied by the children. We ensure that all children have the opportunity to display their best work at some time during the year. All classrooms are well resourced and we believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources and produces high-quality work by the children.

All our teachers reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and plan their professional development needs accordingly. We do all we can to support our teachers in developing their skills, so that we can continually improve practice. We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all.

The Role of Governors

Our Governors determine, support, monitor and review the school policies on teaching and learning. In particular they:

- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
- ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning;
- monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations;
- monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment;
- ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching;
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the school self-review processes. These include reports from subject leaders, termly Headteacher reports to Governors, as well as a review of the Professional Development for our staff.

The Role of Parents

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We do all we can to inform parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- sending information to parents at the start of each term in which we outline the topics that the children will be studying during that term at school;
- giving regular reports to parents in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can improve further;
- explaining to parents how they can support their children with homework.
- providing information of our website to help
- providing workshops to guide parents and develop understanding of different strategies and approaches they can use to support their child at home.

We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We would like parents to:

- ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible;
- ensure that their child is ready for school with the correct uniform, curriculum resources and PE kit;
- do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school;
- inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school;
- promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general;
- regularly practise key skills with their child- reading, number facts and spelling (in line with homework sent home);
- work in partnership with the school to support their child's needs.

The Role of Children

We believe that it is important for children to be the owners of their own learning; they won't see it as intrinsic to life if they don't own it themselves. We do all we can to help children to develop a sense of 'owning' their own learning by encouraging them to:

- ✚ Tackle new tasks confidently
- ✚ control attention and resist distraction
- ✚ Engage in independent & co-operative activities with peers
- ✚ speak about how they have done something or what they have learnt
- ✚ make reasoned choices and decisions
- ✚ Initiate activities and put in their best effort
- ✚ Develop their own strategies of carrying out tasks
- ✚ Evaluate their work and that of their peers for strengths and areas for development

Appendix A – Questioning

- **Targeted questioning** – to raise the attention levels of children, assess understanding, extend thinking and differentiate.
- **Posing questions before asking a particular pupil for a response** – if you call on a pupil before posing the question, the rest of the class is less likely to listen to the question or formulate a response, at times using a no ‘hands up’ approach.
- **Talk partners** – at specific points children turn to the person next to them and share an experience, generate an idea, ask and answer questions or reflect on what they have just learnt.
- **‘Thinking time’** – we give children time to answer questions. When a child is struggling we will sometimes scaffold their response by moving on and asking a similar question of another child and then returning to the original child. Sometimes, we will stick with the child, giving them encouragement to verbalise their answer.
- **Use of Add, Build, Contest, (ABC)** to structure debate.
- **‘Show me’ boards**
- **Response frames** – these provide a skeleton on which to hang ideas – e.g. sentence starters, vocabulary to include, sorting mats and questions to answer.
- **Question generation** – e.g. before watching a video we pose questions or ask the children to work out questions they would find answers to.
- **Group Talk** - We recognise the value of group talk in extending understanding and developing higher levels of thinking. In order to help the children communicate more effectively within a group, we establish appropriate behaviours at the start of each new academic year.

Appendix B – gaining effective responses from pupils

Responses to answers from learners:

Withhold judgement	• Respond in a non-evaluative fashion e.g. 'Mmmm', or 'Interesting'. • Ask others to respond- 'What do you think of ... idea?'
Invite children to elaborate	• 'Say more about....' • 'Can anyone add to that...?' • 'Would anyone like to build on that point?'
Cue alternative responses	• 'There is no one right answer' • 'What are the alternatives?' • 'Who has a different point of view?' • 'Would anyone like to contest this opinion?'
Challenge children to provide reasons	• 'Give reasons why' • 'Where is the evidence for that?'
Use 'think-pair-share'	• Allow thinking time • Discuss with a partner, then in a group • Pair children so that they can discuss in their first language or in English ('talk partners') • Ask children to feedback on the best idea they have heard <u>from someone else</u>.
Allow rehearsal of responses	• Thinking time- after the question and after the answer. The first allows children to produce more thoughtful answers, the second allows the questioner responding to think for a few seconds about the answer • 'Try out the answer in your head' • 'Try out the answer on your partner'
Invite children's questions	• 'Would anyone like to ask ... a question about that?'
Try alternative methods for a show of hands	• Use whiteboards for note taking and responses

Appendix C – assessment strategies

- Use of individual writing boards to rapidly assessing the pupils' knowledge. It also allows pupils a less pressured way of practising prior to independent learning and a forum to magpie ideas off peers to make their own subsequent work better.
- Use of lollipop sticks or other randomizing strategies to choose pupils ensuring that hands up" strategies do not predominate.
- Focus on **key words** – we ask the children to count on their fingers or record on show me boards each time they hear key words. Different groups of children listen for different words.
- **Picture this** – we ask children to make a picture in their heads as they listen (visualise).
- **Statement games** – the children are given a number of statements which they must group in some way. The task can be made more sophisticated by asking the children to decide if a statement is justifiable with reference to text or video evidence.
- **Support access to challenging texts with structured discussion and prior exposure for less able children.**

Appendix D – different learning opportunities

We offer a range of learning and extra-curricular opportunities for pupils to extend their knowledge, skills and understanding, ensuring a broad and balanced curriculum. **These include:**

- Investigating and problem solving
- A range of artistic, creative and sporting activities
- Use of props/ 'real' objects to scaffold learning
- Research and finding out
- Group work
- Pair work
- Independent work
- Whole-class work
- Asking and answering questions
- Use of ICT
- Building learning from experience
- Fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest
- Working with experts
- Participating in local competitions
- Taking on increasingly sophisticated responsibilities
- Watching video and responding to recorded material
- Drama, debates, role plays, philosophy and oral presentations
- Designing and making things
- Participating in physical activity
- Working towards an end goal
- Working with other schools, including secondary schools, to provide specialist teaching and opportunities.

Appendix E – Self-evaluation

We encourage pupil self-evaluation by:

- Sharing learning intentions and basing the lesson on success criteria
- Displaying success criteria for a lesson or unit of work prominently in the classroom and updating this regularly.
- Pupils assessing their own learning through the use of colour coded ‘traffic lights’ or smiley faces or thumbs up/down in KS1.
- Pupils assessing their work against the success criteria in KS2 and being involved in improving their work e.g. by editing or reworking a section
- Pupils responding to teachers’ marking and to the questions that teachers set as a result of marking
- Providing opportunities for pupils to self and partner marking
- Encouraging children to discuss their learning – (Ref. Shirley Clarke discussion prompts)

Appendix F – The school learning environment

- Displays often serve as learning prompts for children – word lists, high frequency words, connectives, number lines, time lines number squares, clocks etc.
- The classroom environment reflects a multi-cultural content.
- All classrooms have an attractive and tempting reading area.
- All classrooms have a worship area and an RE display

Resources that must be in the classroom:

Display of key words on working walls about the children's current learning so that children use them to support their thinking and reasoning. These must be referred to (and revisited) in lessons and can be generated with the children.

Working walls should reference the learning journey, and share excellence with the children by providing good worked models (What a good one looks like), and sometimes unpicking a poor worked model (What a 'bad' one looks like).

Agreed classroom rules, routines and procedures made public and referred to.

Appendix G – Teaching & Learning Non-Negotiables

The minimum standard of teaching must be 'Good'.

Teachers are also aware of the DFE Teachers' Standards 2012 and recognise that these too are non-negotiable and are requirements of the all members of the teaching profession.

For lessons to be judged as outstanding they need to be at least good, as described above, in all major respects and exemplary in significant elements:

We have agreed that a good lesson must include:
Information from assessments used to set tasks that are well matched to groups of pupils' prior attainment.
Teachers select and utilise a range of teaching styles and resources that allow all children to engage fully with the lesson and leads to strong outcomes.
Classroom environment is utilised to enhance the learning process through working walls and other resources; providing support in specific tasks & exemplifying success. Displays around school celebrate the learning achieved.
Success criteria is layered to increase depth of challenge, with an assumption that all children will achieve a sufficient understanding of the lesson objective.
Lessons have clear objectives and success criteria that are used to underpin task design. These are shared with (and sometimes co-constructed with) the children at a point that is most conducive to learning.
Progress is visible by all children within the lesson, either through new learning, or through a deeper consolidation of understanding and application. The vast majority of children understand how learning builds on previous learning and begin to recognise the next steps in their learning journey (appropriate to age and stage).
Opportunities are made to allow children to reflect on their learning and consider the next steps. Adequate opportunities are provided to allow children to take responsibility for their learning. Children are given the opportunity to struggle with new learning (i.e. learning is not over-scaffolded).
Lessons are adapted in response to misconceptions that are brought to light through questioning or checks on pupils' work.
Questions and task design tease out pupils' understanding so that the teacher is aware of the degree to which most pupils are secure.
The teacher demonstrates a good degree of subject knowledge when framing and answering questions and asking questions to reveal misconceptions.
The pace of learning is appropriate to the task and learning time is maximised through good classroom organisation and management.
Only the briefest of reminders is required to refocus any pupils whose attention may have wandered and pupils strive to do their best. Strategies are in place for those children who find it more challenging to concentrate for the expected time.
Pupils find the strategies and tasks interesting and enjoyable. They contribute and concentrate well, listening to each other and to the teacher (or member of staff leading the session).
Every opportunity is used to reinforce and apply basic skills and knowledge through all subject areas.
Quality first teaching supports pupils with specific learning needs allowing them to work independently and make good progress during the lesson. All children are provided with sufficient challenge.
Resources, including teaching assistants where applicable, are well deployed to support learning for groups of pupils regardless of their aptitudes and needs so that all such groups make at least good progress.
Work is pitched at a level that is achievable for most children but provides sufficient challenge and enrichment and develops understanding and competence. Strategies are used to support those children who have not yet grasped the learning (e.g. through pre and post teaching).
An open challenge approach to teaching is used which develops ambitious learning behaviour where children and adults value effort over ability.

Appendix F: Dialogue following a lesson observation

The following questions can help to facilitate reflection on practice after monitoring/ lesson observations:

- ✚ Where does this lesson fit into your sequence of teaching/ learning?
- ✚ What have the children had to learn in order to get to this point?
- ✚ What did the children already know?
- ✚ How will you develop what the children have done so far?
- ✚ How might the next lesson be adapted in the light of what happened in this lesson?
- ✚ How will you know if a child is making progress?
- ✚ Would you do anything differently if you could do the lesson again?
- ✚ Why did you make the decision you made today to ... teach/ present/ intervene...
- ✚ What focus would you identify for yourself to work on next? What are you struggling with? What actions will you take to achieve this?