



Teaching & Learning Policy

June 2013

1 Introduction

1.1 At Sonning Common Primary School 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; it should be fun. Through our teaching we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding which enable them 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.

2 Aims and objectives

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

2.2 Through our teaching we will:

- 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 them to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others;
- show respect for all cultures and, in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people
- enable children to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of the community
- help children grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens

3 Effective learning

3.1 We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to develop strategies which enable all children to access learning

3.2 We will offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways. These include:

- investigation and problem solving
- research and finding out;
- group work
- paired work
- independent work
- whole-class work
- asking and answering questions
- use of computer
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest
- creative activities
- watching television / DVDs and responding to music or recorded material
- debates, role-play and oral presentations
- designing and making things

- participation in athletic or physical activity

3.3 ***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 – what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn.***

4 **Effective teaching**

4.1 When teaching we focus on motivating the children and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. We use the school curriculum plan to guide our teaching. This sets out the aims, objectives and values of the school and details what is to be taught to each year group.

4.2 ***We base our teaching on our knowledge of the children’s level of attainment. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge and skills of the children. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child’s level of ability. 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 our aim is for work at Sonning Common Primary School to be of the highest possible standard.***

4.3 We regularly discuss each child’s progress with them and identify targets for future development.

4.4 We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives. We take these objectives from the Foundation Stage Curriculum, National Curriculum or the National Literacy or Numeracy Strategy. Our plans contain information about the tasks to be set, and where appropriate identify assessment opportunities. Schemes of work are evaluated at the end of each term.

4.5 Teachers make a special effort to establish good working relationships with all children in the class. We treat the children with kindness and respect. We treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All 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, by so doing, 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 school behaviour policy.

4.6 We ensure that all tasks and activities that the children do are safe. When we plan to take children out of the village, we first inform parents and where it is out of the village obtain their permission.

4.7 We deploy learning assistants and other adult helpers as effectively as possible. Sometimes they work with individual children and sometimes they work with small groups. Our adult helpers also assist with the preparation and storage of classroom equipment.

- 4.8 Our classrooms are attractive learning environments. We change displays at least once a term, 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 have a range of dictionaries. The library contains a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by the children.
- 4.9 Teachers reflect on their own strengths and weaknesses and plan their professional development needs accordingly. We do all we can to support our colleagues in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice.

We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all.

5 Teaching and Learning

5.1 Planning for teaching and learning

- planning is detailed and thorough but flexible.
- activities are differentiated as and when appropriate.
- teachers' planning is part of a school-wide system aimed at ensuring full coverage of Foundation Stage Curriculum, National Curriculum attainment targets and programmes of study, and providing consistency, continuity and progression in the learning.
- planning takes place over a number of timescales: yearly; termly weekly and daily.
- planning is informed by assessments of children's previous learning.
- in addition to topics, work specific to separate subjects is planned.
- links with other subjects are included when the content of planned activities is considered.

5.2 Teaching strategies

- clear statement of each lesson's objective
- use of good oral instructions to set the scene and explain tasks to the whole class or to a group
- opportunities provided for pupils to raise questions about tasks or activities and for the teacher to listen to the pupils
- skilful questioning to encourage the children to think and use knowledge already acquired
- use of differentiated and appropriate work which will support, reinforce, extend and challenge the pupils' understanding of a topic
- observation of pupils' work and of pupils at work to help with assessment; careful and regular monitoring of pupil progress
- teacher interaction and purposeful intervention in pupils' work
- appropriate use of teacher demonstration
- use of good work by pupils as a model for others

- teaching targeted to specific individuals or groups
- appropriate use of praise and encouragement
- feedback to pupils during lessons
- continuous assessment as an aid to the learning process
- criteria for assessing work made explicit to the children

5.3 Organisational strategies – using a wide range of Afl strategies to move the learning forwards, for example

- carefully planned and appropriate groupings of pupils for tasks
- a mixture of individual, group and whole-class teaching
- a manageable number of teaching groups and learning activities provided in the classroom at any one time
- carefully planned use of the teacher's time for giving instructions, teaching the whole class, individuals and groups, and moving between activities to instruct, question, explain and assess
- planned use of the pupils' time including the setting of realistic deadlines for the completions of work
- clearly established classroom routines and systems
- use of focussed group work

Organisational rules

- guided reading will be conducted at least 4 times a week and over a two week period every child in the class will be heard to read by the class teacher
- handwriting sessions will be taught at least 4 times a week
- the introductory activity for all maths sessions will be based on the four basic rules
- during maths lessons guided group work will be the preferred method of teaching
- in literacy and numeracy use of focussed group work so that the teacher works with every child at least once a fortnight
- children in EYFS will be encouraged to share books and will be read to by the adults in the class daily ~ activities will be provided to encourage the children to mark make and produce recognisable letters using correct pencil grip ~ maths activities will be mostly practical with clear learning objectives based on the Early learning goals.

6 Afl Golden Rules

- these will be followed by all staff at all times (Appendix 1)

7 Presentation Guidelines for Maths and English

- These will be followed by all staff at all times (Appendix 2)

8 The role of governors

- 8.1 Our governors 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 with regard to 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 which include reports from subject leaders and the annual head teacher's report to governors as well as a review of the in-service training sessions attended by our staff.

9 The role of parents

- 9.1 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:
- holding parents' evenings to explain our school strategies for teaching and learning
 - 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
 - sending 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 for example, regular shared reading with all children, and support for older children with their projects and investigative work
- 9.2 We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We expect parents to:
- ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible
 - ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform 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
 - fulfil the requirements set out in the home/school agreement.

10 Monitoring and review

- 10.1 We are aware of the need to review the school teaching and learning policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school. We will review our policy annually.

TEACHING : A CHECKLIST

BENCHMARK	CRITERIA : teachers
<p>Teachers :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subjects of areas they teach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have familiarity with National Curriculum subject orders and relevant RE syllabus and course and exam requirements • Have appropriate qualifications, experience and training. • Plan activities and carry them out effectively. • Ask relevant questions and provide explanations. • Mark and respond to pupils' work perceptively. • Make subject knowledge comprehensible to pupils. • Provide demanding work for more able pupils.
<p>Teachers :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set high expectations so as to challenge pupils and deepen their knowledge and understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide content, activities and learning resources with appropriate level of challenge for pupils of different attainments. • Match teaching well to pupils' stage of learning. • Know how pupils will gain most from the teaching. • Expect application, accuracy and good presentation. • Ask pupils to use critical thinking, creativity and imagination.
<p>Teachers :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set clear learning objectives. • Covers Foundation Stage Curriculum. • Incorporate requirements of National Curriculum. • Summarise what pupils will do and the resources they need. • Show how knowledge and understanding can be extended to suit pupils' needs. • Involve support staff effectively.
<p>Teachers :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ methods and organisational strategies which match curricular objectives and the needs of all pupils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likely to include explanation, demonstration, discussion, practical activity, investigation and problem solving. • Fit for the purpose of achieving high standards of work and behaviour, challenging thinking and moving at pace. • Appropriate to extend or deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding and develop their skills. • Appropriate for the curricular objectives being pursued. • Well matched to what pupils know, understand and can do and what they need to learn next. • Supported by appropriate organisation for individuals, pairs, small groups or whole class. • Organised to allow teachers to interact with pupils positively and economically.
<p>Teachers :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage pupils well and achieve high standards of discipline. • Use time and resources effectively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable pupils to : • Work productively and remain 'on task'. • Use time well. <p>Be clear about what they are doing, why they are doing it, how long they have to do it and the way in which they can judge success in their work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance their learning by using appropriate resources.
<p>Teachers :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess pupils' work thoroughly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use intervention and marking to help pupils understanding what they need to do to improve their work and make progress.

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and constructively and use assessments to inform teaching.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listen, encourage, praise and steer towards new learning or clearer understanding.• Diagnose problems, mark consistently.• Use effectively the targets set in IEPs.
Teachers : <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use homework effectively to reinforce and/or extend what is learned in school	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow up homework effectively• Help pupils to work independently.

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BENCHMARK	CRITERIA : teachers
<p>Pupils :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show interest in their work and are able to sustain concentration and develop their capacity for personal study. 	<p>Pupils are :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involved in and enjoy learning. • Willing to apply themselves to the task in hand. • Responsive to challenging tasks. • Learn from mistakes. • Ask and answer questions. • Join in discussions. • Show enthusiasm. • Concentrate in listening to teacher. • Work confidently with independence to generate ideas and solve problems. • Persevere and complete tasks when difficulties arise. • Select and use relevant sources. • Want to improve their work. • Take a pride in the finished product. • In the older age range, carrying more responsibility for the organisation of their work taking the initiative and setting some of their own tasks in discussion with teacher
<p>Pupils :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behave well in and around the school and are courteous and trustworthy and show respect for property. • Form constructive relationships with one another, with teachers and other adults and work collaboratively when required. 	<p>Pupils :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behave well and help their learning. • Respond well to school rules. • Know right from wrong. • Take responsibility for their own actions. • Relate appropriately to others. • Work together in lessons. • Support one another in school activities. • Respect one another, teachers and other adults. • Articulate their own views and beliefs. • Show respect for property.
<p>Pupils :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show respect for other people's feelings, values and beliefs. 	<p>Pupils :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to what others say. • Show an interest in views and ideas different from their own. • Recognise and develop understanding of the diversity of beliefs, attitudes and social and cultural traditions. • Reflect on and discuss their behaviour, feelings and experiences.
<p>Pupils :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show initiative and are willing to take responsibility 	<p>Pupils :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve themselves in the daily routines of the school • Respond well to teaching and the curriculum. • Offer help, including organising other people. • Take on responsibilities in the classroom and the school. • Take on greater responsibility and show initiative as they move up in the school

Appendix 1

Afl Golden Rules

We share the Learning Objective with the pupils at some point during the lesson.

We will give pupils a time at the start of every lesson for them to read and respond to marking comments.

There is a time for reflection to gauge the understanding of the pupils at some point during the lesson, or block of lessons. We employ techniques such as peer and self-assessment to engage deeper reflection.

Success Criteria is agreed at some point during the lesson.

Marking is geared towards the Learning Objective of the lesson, Success Criteria for a block of work and the pupil's individual target.

Key Stage 2. There is evidence of 'closing the gap' marking at least once per block or unit of work in Literacy and Maths. All work is acknowledged daily.

All children have an individual writing target which is referred to in all pieces of written work across the curriculum.

We use tickled pink and green to grow in Year 1 and Year 2 and if appropriate in Year 3. In Year 4, 5 and 6 we use two stars and a wish. Marking comments will be simple and specific. The comments will state what needs to be achieved for ongoing progress to be made.

As age appropriate, pupils will be encouraged to mark their own work for instant feedback, especially in maths.

Appendix 2

Presentation Guidelines for Pupils

Handwriting is in pencil and should be joined in the style of the school handwriting scheme. Once children have shown that they can maintain joined writing AND neat presentation, they will be awarded a 'Pen Licence' and can then use a black roller ball pen. Biro's are not to be used.

The date is written in short and in the left-hand margin on the top line. Children use a small dot to separate the numbers rather than lines (i.e. 3. 9. 11 NOT 3/9/11) If you want to practise writing the long date (e.g. in handwriting lessons) it should be on the right hand side of the line.

The title is written in the middle of the top line and is the same size as the other writing (i.e. not with huge letters). It is not underlined.

Children should not rule off previous work but simply leave an empty line. In Handwriting children may write on alternate lines to make the letter formation clearer. This needs to be consistent.

Questions are numbered in the margin (if available). Numbers are not circled but may be followed by a small dot. The number should be quite close to the margin line not in the middle of the margin (it is too hard to keep them in a straight line).

Mistakes are crossed through with one neat line (using a ruler if more than a single word). Rubbers may be used in Maths for small mistakes but when whole sums are wrong they should be crossed through with one line.