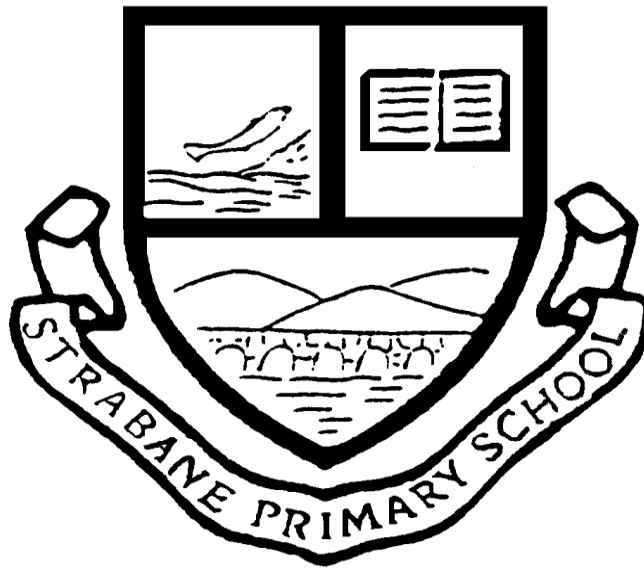


Strabane Controlled Primary



Learning and Teaching Policy

Date approved by
Board of Governors:
September 2021

Next Review Due:
September 2023

STRABANE CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL

LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY

‘Learning and Teaching approaches should provide suitably challenging opportunities for all pupils to take part in lessons fully and effectively and should allow all pupils to achieve.’
(NIC Primary 2007)

1. INTRODUCTION

The staff at Strabane Primary School believe that learning and teaching is central to our mission as a school. We acknowledge that quality teaching is essential for quality learning. We strive to develop all pupils to their full potential in a happy and caring environment that is a testament to the theme of our school motto:

“Safe, Secure, Successful”

This policy seeks to identify the effective features of learning and teaching which translate the aims of the school and the curriculum into relevant and challenging learning experiences for all pupils. The staff is united in this mission and works to establish an ethos of continuous improvement.

2. THE AIMS OF OUR LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY

The fundamental aim is to ensure that every learning and teaching opportunity is maximised so that everyone involved is assisted in their pathway to lifelong learning.

2.1 In order to achieve this primary outcome we will endeavour to:

- Provide a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum based on the principles of the Northern Ireland Curriculum that is accessible to all.
- Encourage all pupils to become active and autonomous learners by making all learning and teaching as exciting and interesting as possible
- Design and implement learning and teaching activities which facilitate the development of independence among all learners
- Cater for different types of intelligences and do so via a variety of teaching styles
- Cater for all types of learning styles
- Develop and support a range of teaching approaches that cater effectively for the whole ability spectrum in order that all pupils achieve maximum learning
- Create and sustain a stimulating learning environment at all times that reflects current taught themes in the class and the year groups
- Provide appropriate staff development opportunities so that there are consistently high quality learning and teaching experiences within and across all year groups

- Consistently monitor and evaluate provision and provide regular year group and individual feedback to staff so as to ensure consistently high quality learning and teaching experiences within and across all year groups
- Acquire, maintain and utilise appropriate high quality resources to support all learning and teaching
- Work in close partnership with the parents as the first educators of their children to provide the very best learning experiences and all round education for each and every pupil in our school.

3. **PLANNING FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING**

In order to secure high quality learning and teaching we have an agreed format for planning. We plan thoroughly via schemes of work, four weekly planners and daily planning. There will be various aspects to our planning, these will include:

- Clear, specified learning outcomes
- Differentiation of teaching activities for various ability groups
- A clear breadth and balance to planned activities within and across curricular areas
- Clear progression within planning
- Regular evaluation of the effectiveness of learning and teaching
- Secure opportunities for learners to engage in peer-evaluation and self-evaluation, where appropriate

3.1 We believe that collaborative planning is fundamental to supporting quality teaching and learning. In order to secure the above, we recognise that appropriate time must be provided. Accordingly, staff will have regular opportunities to:

- Plan collaboratively as year groups
- Evaluate the effectiveness of previous planning so as to inform future planning
- Reflect on existing practice in order to improve future provision
- Acquire resources for effective learning and teaching activities
- Efficiently plan and manage accelerated learning resources for effective classroom organisation

Individual teachers hold copies of yearly schemes and overviews.

Individual teachers hold four weekly planners, with copies in a file in the staffroom.

3.2 Home work will be provided for all pupils in line with the requirements outlined in the school's homework policy. These are designed to reinforce and extend learning across all curricular areas and especially within literacy and numeracy.

4 CROSS CURRICULAR THEMES

All cross curricular areas of literacy, numeracy, ICT, TSPC, WAU and PDMU should be delivered in a coherent and effective manner. The cross curricular linkage should be planned, resourced and implemented only when the linkages are natural and meaningful.

Furthermore, the activities delivered and the targets established must be appropriate to the age group/ability group that the pupils are in.

5 CREATING A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

There are positive effects on standards and motivation of pupils associated with the physical environment.

We will endeavour to ensure that:

- The learning environment will be safe, stimulating, bright, attractive, well-organised, well- resourced and welcoming.
- All resources will be well-maintained, effectively displayed or stored. Equipment is labelled and accessible to promote independent learning.
- As appropriate there will be distinct areas within the classroom for specific learning to take place eg the reading corner. Role play areas will be created (where and when relevant).
- Careful attention will be given to physical conditions within the classroom eg it should be well ventilated and properly lit.
- Classroom and school displays will both celebrate pupils' achievements and support learning. Displays will be stimulating, language rich and changed regularly.

Children in our school take on responsibility for ensuring their classroom is a pleasant and safe place to learn by being allocated specific roles e.g. classroom helper, milk monitor etc. Children are reminded that we all have a duty of care for equipment and should not misuse, damage or waste it.

Within this learning environment, all children will feel valued, all points of views will be appreciated, efforts rewarded and achievements celebrated. All will be encouraged to engage in meaningful, purposeful tasks with the emphasis placed on positive behaviour, good relationships and realistically high expectations for all learners.

6. STRATEGIES TO DEVELOP MOTIVATION AND ATTITUDES TO LEARNING

We will focus on positive behaviour, praising and rewarding individuals/groups who achieve the desired behaviour. Teachers will model desired/appropriate attitudes and also draw attention to these when they are evident in class. Our strategies will include the following:

- Set clear learning objectives so that the pupils are aware of what they are expected to learn/how they are expected to behave

- Give responsibility appropriately to develop independence and self-motivation/self-discipline
- Deliver interesting, varied and enjoyable lessons using V.A.K. and a multi-sensory approach where possible
- Set achievable targets and state time deadlines
- Develop confidence by creating a climate where opinions are valued
- Ensure that classrooms are bright, welcoming and child-focused, and that pupils' work is prominently displayed
- Use 'Time Out' slots for moments of reflection
- Devise a system of rewards for effort and special achievements. These can include:
 - House points
 - Star Pupil Award, Pupil of the Month
 - Homework passes
 - Motivational marking, stickers, certificates
 - Treats/prizes
 - Golden Time/extra sessions of a favourite subject
 - Showing work to another teacher, class or the principal. Principal gives stickers to children for good work.

7. **INDEPENDENT LEARNERS**

Independent learning will be developed in a variety of ways **appropriate** to the age and ability of the learner. The strategies outlined below will provide the core approaches to the development of such independence.

All pupils will have the opportunity to undertake:

- Leadership roles in curricular and organisational areas (eg member of School Council/group leader)
- Research activities utilising appropriate technologies
- Self-correction and correction of partner's work
- Personal organisational skills (eg personal hygiene, organisation of personal resources)
- Role modelling (eg use of ICT equipment/pair work)
- Supporting younger pupils' management at lunch time as playground buddies

8. **CLASSROOM ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT TO DEVELOP HIGH QUALITY LEARNING AND TEACHING**

At Strabane Primary School we recognise the importance of all our human resources- teachers, classroom assistants and support staff.

The class teacher will ensure an efficient and effective organisational system is secured within the classroom to facilitate high quality learning and teaching.

In order to do this, the teacher will regularly review practice to ensure a vibrant, stimulating, well-planned environment in which the work of learning assistants is

maximised for the benefit of pupils. Children will work within a variety of ability groups and have easy access to appropriate resources as they follow an effective, well-planned curriculum.

There will be a smooth transition between lessons and activities. Good order and positive social-interaction will be encouraged. Effective use of time management and resources will play a crucial role in producing high quality learning and teaching in Strabane P.S.

9. TEACHING STRATEGIES AND STYLES TO SECURE LEARNING

In order to secure learning across all identified intelligences and in a manner that will meet the learning styles of our pupils, teachers ensure that whenever possible that there is a visual, auditory and kinaesthetic element to each lesson, so that children can see, hear and do. These will be reviewed regularly to ascertain whether or not there is a balance of VAK learning taking place. Clear learning intentions will be communicated to the pupils as appropriate. We will engage with the children, encourage all to become involved, value their contributions and offer constructive, supportive feedback as required.

9.1 A wide range of teaching strategies will be employed which will include:

- Practical activities, group, paired and individual
- Whole class activities
- Problem-solving activities
- Group discussion
- Open-ended thought provoking and challenging questions
- Pupil led activities
- Activity based sharing/learning
- Topic-based activities
- Outdoor Play
- Educational visits to places of educational interest
- Watching media, responding to music and recorded material
- Guest visitors and performers e.g The Banyan Theatre
- Circle time
- AFL methods
- Research and finding out
- Appropriate and targeted use of ICT
- Withdrawal situations
- Afterschool clubs

These will be backed up by appropriate reinforcement. Realistic, high expectations in a variety of situations will be maintained. Activities will be well-paced and challenging. Our teaching strategies will also facilitate the early identification and support for children with learning difficulties.

9.2 AFL strategies will be embedded appropriately throughout learning and teaching opportunities. Children will receive regular feedback on their

performance that will have a clear focus on the established learning intentions. Children will be made aware of how to improve their work to enable them to achieve their best.

10. **STRATEGIES TO SECURE HIGH QUALITY LEARNING AND TEACHING FOR PUPILS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES**

We are very aware that some pupils because of their learning difficulties have additional special needs. Additional support is provided to identified pupils so all children can access the curriculum and fulfil their potential. Our school has two part-time Learning Support teachers who with the rest of the teaching staff cater for such pupils.

As a school committed to developing all our pupils in a holistic manner, we recognise that all pupils are unique and develop at varying rates. We also appreciate that some pupils experience learning difficulties.

In order to cater effectively for these learners we will ensure:

- The implementation of a focused, diagnostic assessment system so as to identify pupils' learning needs as early as possible
- The provision of appropriate staff training and development in order to secure the most effective teaching possible
- The full implementation of the Code of Practice
- Close liaison between school, home and outside agencies
- The development of IEPs and group EPs inclusive of SMART targets
- The consistent differentiation of the curriculum to meet the needs of all learners
- Withdrawal support for those who need it
- Regular review of all our SEN procedures and practices
- The implementation of appropriate support programmes for pupils/parents (eg Paired Reading etc.)

Throughout the application of all these strategies we will consistently focus on improving, developing and raising the self-esteem and attainment of our pupils.

11. **DYSLEXIC APPROACHES**

Adjustments to lessons taught will be made at the discretion of the class teacher who will be most aware of the specific needs of the child. The SENCO will ensure that all relevant information to children with dyslexia is available to the class teacher.

11.1 The types of strategies that will be prevalent will include some of the following:

- Use of coloured paper
- Use of coloured pencils/pens

- Use of enlarged print
- Appropriate differentiation of writing activities/spellings/reading material/comprehension/etc
- Appropriate use of reading support e.g alternative reading scheme
- Small steps to progression approach

12. STRATEGIES TO SECURE HIGH QUALITY LEARNING AND TEACHING FOR GIFTED AND TALENTED PUPILS

At Strabane Primary School we are also aware that, on occasions, there may be gifted or talented pupils attending the school. We use the following criteria to identify such pupils.

- Pupils who achieve at a level significantly in advance of the average for their year group

While we consider such pupils to also have an additional special need they are primarily the responsibility of the class teacher. If parents think that their child is gifted and talented, we encourage them to contact us and discuss the child with their class teacher, in the first instance as sometimes exceptional abilities are evident only outside the school setting and we feel it is important that parents communicate this to us. We also hope to identify these pupils, as early as possible, by our normal screening and testing processes as well as professional judgement.

We will determine the needs of individual pupils and provide them with engaging, independent learning activities appropriate to their ability level, at the same time keeping them within their peer group to develop their own leadership skills and to provide them with the praise and reassurance that is necessary to nurture their talent.

12.1 In order to do this effectively we will:

- Ensure that effective diagnostic procedures are in place to identify such learners
- Ensure that staff receive appropriate training to support the development of such learners
- Finance permitting, additional support staff will be available to meet the needs of gifted children
- Utilise differentiated teaching approaches e.g. investigation work, problem solving/open ended work and set challenging work.
- Secure effective liaison and support between SENCO, class teachers and assistants
- Provide a wide range of activities across curricular and extra-curricular areas so that such learners experience a breadth of engagement with learning. Their talents are celebrated by the whole school community.
- Utilise a variety of resources, appropriate technologies and competitions to challenge and engage such learners. We recognise achievements in school assemblies and through the local media.
- Maintain and communicate realistic, high expectations for such pupils

- Ensure that such pupils are allocated appropriate roles and responsibilities in line with their ability and maturity (eg team leader, mentor for other pupils)
- Continually review and evaluate the provision that we offer for such learners

Parents of such children will be consulted regularly on the best way forward and ways in which they can help.

13. TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING OF PUPILS' WORK TO SECURE SUSTAINED HIGH QUALITY LEARNING AND TEACHING

We believe that the assessment, recording and reporting of pupils' work has a key role to play in ensuring the sustained achievement of our pupils. We recognise that assessment should be varied, regular and consistent, and the outcomes should be utilised to inform future learning and teaching, as well as sharing progress with pupils, parents and relevant professionals (eg educational psychologist.)

13.1 The assessment, recording and reporting procedures utilised at Strabane C.P.S. are kept under constant review so they are fit for purpose. Currently we utilise:

- Regular agreed levelling of Numeracy and Literacy
- Teacher observation
- Curriculum marking
- Standardised tests yearly
- Pupil discussions to inform assessment outcomes

We currently record assessment outcomes in:

- Pupils' books
- Reading records
- Assessment Manager (SIMS)
- Pupils' reports (annual)
- Teachers' planners

13.2 We report assessment outcomes via:

- Pupils' reports (annual)
- Parent/teacher meetings (yearly)

This whole school approach to assessment, recording and reporting is designed to secure:

- Regular appropriate feedback to pupils, parents, coordinators and other professionals

- Targets for future learning
- An effective review of the success of the learning and teaching programmes implemented
- The identification at class, year group, key stage and whole school levels of development opportunities for the school

14. COORDINATION OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

The various curriculum coordinators will have responsibility for the development of learning and teaching in Strabane Primary School. This responsibility includes leading staff development in generic learning and teaching, attending external in-service training and providing in-house staff training.

15. CONTINUITY AND PROGRESSION

The various curriculum coordinators will ensure that there is continuity of teaching and learning approaches in their subject area across and throughout the school by promoting recommended approaches and by providing staff development related to the recommended approaches.

16. WHOLE SCHOOL MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

As a self-evaluating school we recognise the need to consistently monitor our work and evaluate it against best practice.

We use a range of methods that we utilise to support this process and these include:

- Teachers' monitoring and evaluation of pupil performance
- Teachers are encouraged to be reflective practitioners. Practice is discussed and shared informally. More formal evaluation is completed through weekly evaluations in 4 weekly planners.
- Teachers' self-evaluation/improvement is facilitated by our PRSD system
- Coordinators' monitoring and evaluation of planners and pupils' work
- Twice yearly check of books (Book Scoop) against planners takes place in January and June
- Key stage/staff meetings
- SLT's curriculum monitoring and evaluation
- Principal's curriculum monitoring and evaluation
- Annual action planning.
- School development planning.
- Strategic planning.
- Analysis of Assessment Data
- Teacher tutor-B.T /E.P.D.
- I.S.E.F.

17. POLICY REVIEW

The review of this policy will be carried out in September 2023 by the Vice-Principal, Mrs Donnell.