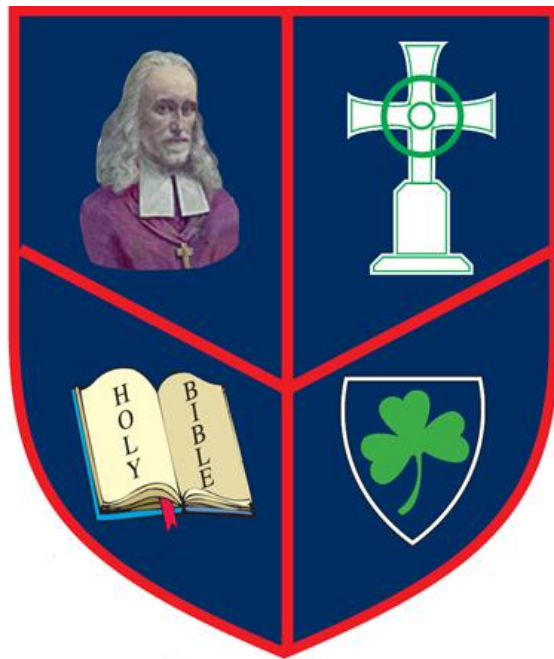


Teaching and Learning Policy



January 2023

INTRODUCTION

The staff at St Oliver Plunkett Primary School believe that teaching and learning is central to our mission as a school.

“As a Catholic school, we at St Oliver Plunkett PS we aim to provide a caring, secure, inclusive and happy environment in which all children are treated as special and most precious members of our school community. We endeavour to meet their needs, while nurturing their gifts and talents. An ethos of achievement, improvement and ambition exists, with clear expectations that all pupils can and will achieve to the very best of their ability. We seek to create a learning community where children, parents, staff and governors demonstrate a commitment to learning and support of each other. We pray together, we play together and we work together to promote excellence across all areas of the curriculum. Our motto embodies our mission statement: Love more, Learn more.”

We believe that quality teaching is essential for quality learning and that our Catholic values and ethos fortify this process and permeate all aspects of school life. We strive to develop all pupils to their full potential in a safe and secure environment.

The key to successful pupil learning is effective teaching differentiated to need. Effective teaching occurs when teachers understand and can apply the principles of the learning process to a range of children in a variety of situations. We believe that at St Oliver Plunkett Primary School, learning is part of growing and is essential to the development of the whole child.

AIMS

- to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which gives every child the opportunity to achieve their potential
- to provide a structured learning environment which builds on strengths and supports needs thus promoting independence and self-esteem
- to set and expect high standards in everything we do
- to equip children with the knowledge and skills to enable them to progress confidently into secondary education and adult life
- to enable effective learning
- to promote a reflective approach to teaching
- to encourage a consistent approach to teaching
- to develop children as independent learners

- to enable children to make maximum possible progress intellectually, physically, socially, spiritually and morally
- to enable children to have equal access to the curriculum.

Our curriculum is skills based; enabling children to develop the skills they need to be effective, enthusiastic learners, applying skills and knowledge in a wide range of contexts. Lessons are planned around these steps, and we differentiate learning to match the needs of the children within our classes.

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

We recognise the role of the environment in promoting positive attitudes to and supporting learning. We aim to provide a learning environment that:

- promotes well-being and is secure and safe
- Is rich in language and in number
- Is well ordered and organised
- Conveys high levels of expectation
- Is consistent between classes
- Promotes an atmosphere of mutual respect
- Promotes independence and appropriate ways of working
- Is bright, colourful and stimulating to the senses
- Has a variety of displays covering the breadth of the curriculum
- Has displays which are interactive, record celebrations, set standards of presentation and celebrate children's work and interests

LEARNING AND THE LEARNER'S ROLE

Learners are most effective when they are involved in and take responsibility for, their own learning. Learning therefore should aim to increase levels of independence and develop the ability to work with sustained concentration for age-appropriate periods of time.

Effective learning strategies we aim to promote are:

- The ability to ask and answer questions
- Concentration when listening

- Contributing to discussions in a relevant and thoughtful way
- Co-operating and working collaboratively with peers and adults
- Problem solving skills
- Selecting appropriate resources for a task and putting them away
- Organisational skills
- Responding to and persevering with a task to a conclusion
- Taking pride in the presentation of work
- Presentational skills
- Organising learning
- Responding and conforming to established routines and practices
- Explaining their understanding
- Appreciating and evaluating their own work and that of others - elf and peer assessment
- Setting personal targets

TEACHING AND THE TEACHER'S ROLE

We recognise that the organisation and effectiveness of teaching has a direct impact on the quality of the child's learning experience. We aim to develop and refine our teaching by adopting a reflective approach to pedagogy, a pro-active approach to change and a responsibility for ensuring our own continued professional development and learning. Within our work we aim to develop the following attributes:

- Have high and realistic expectations of ourselves and our pupils
- Be well planned and organised
- Be a role model by being punctual, dressing and speaking appropriately, showing respect for others
- Be supportive of and assist colleagues by respecting individual differences and working collaboratively as part of a whole-staff team
- Have good subject knowledge
- Take a reflective approach to our work
- Seek to improve our skills and understanding through planned professional development
- Develop classroom systems and organisation to support learning
- Develop digital / electronic skills

We aim for our teaching to demonstrate:

- Good quality planning based on the assessment of the children's prior knowledge and understanding.
- Appropriate levels of resourcing
- Clear and shared Learning Intentions
- Concise and shared Success Criteria
- Appropriate use of grouping
- Differentiated and matched activities reflecting an understanding of pupils' ability and development levels
- A range of teaching styles and methods
- Effective use of additional adults within the classroom
- Good pace with effective use of time
- Lesson organisation that involves children in their learning
- Developmental questioning using Blooms Taxonomy
- Challenge, encouraging risk taking and learning from mistakes
- Assessment which is formative across the lesson
- A range of learning mediums, e.g. digital, audio, written

PLANNING

The foundation for curricular development is the School Development Plan; developed through a process of collaboration between staff and approved by governors.

We follow a cross curricular approach to learning where some subjects are taught through a topic and some are covered as discrete subjects. Meetings with colleagues are organised to discuss various aspects of the curriculum and ensure consistency of approach and standards. Planning takes place half termly, with reference to the NI Curriculum. Half termly plans are submitted to the coordinators of Literacy, Numeracy, and Cross Curricular Skills and Activities and UICT. Plans are based upon teacher judgment, data, pupil need and subject expectation.

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

Assessment for learning is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence produced by learners and their teachers to decide where learners are in their

learning, where they need to go and how best to get there." (The Assessment Reform Group).

This is continual and immediate feedback that informs teachers as to how the children are doing. At St Oliver Plunkett Primary School we use a variety of AfL strategies to measure progress within a lesson. Both teachers and pupils should be able to assess progress and success within lessons, units and in the longer term. This information is acted upon to ensure the children are aware of their next steps and take ownership of their learning. That the teachers are aware of next steps in their teaching, to meet the needs of all learners.

MARKING AND FEEDBACK

Questions we consider when developing an approach to marking:

- Why do we mark?
- What do we want to gain from it?
- What do we want children to gain from it? How should children respond to it?

Formative feedback is what we mean when we talk about marking. This means giving pupils information about what they have done well and how they need to improve. It may be oral, written or using symbols.

WHAT IS EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK?

Meaningful: marking varies by age group, subject, and what works best for the pupil and teacher in relation to any particular piece of work. Teachers are encouraged to adjust their approach as necessary and trusted to incorporate the outcomes into subsequent planning and teaching.

Manageable: marking practice is proportionate and considers the frequency and complexity of written feedback, as well as the cost and time-effectiveness of marking in relation to the overall workload of teachers.

Motivating: Marking should help to motivate pupils to progress. This does not mean always writing in-depth comments or being universally positive: sometimes short, challenging comments or oral feedback are more effective. If the

teacher is doing more work than their pupils, this can become a disincentive for pupils to accept challenges and take responsibility for improving their work.

- Feedback needs to be clear and on the intended learning content and relevant to the individual learner
- Feedback is only valuable if it is used by the learner to make improvements and work towards raised achievement levels
- Feedback is based on shared and clearly communicated objectives for learning and reflects the success criteria as discussed by the teacher and the learners
- Not all pieces of work can be quality marked, nor do they need to be if pupils have been provided with verbal feedback during the lesson. Furthermore, if they cannot yet access the written comments then feedback should be verbal.

SELF-MARKING - SELF AND PEER ASSESSMENT

- Children should evaluate their own work where possible to identify mistakes.
- Pupils can look for their own achievements and an area to focus on
- Pupils are to be taught the skills and strategies for marking
- Paired marking should be explicitly taught to children when used
- Children to be trained in peer marking and ground rules to be established and linked to success criteria
- Children will be encouraged to discuss each other's work together

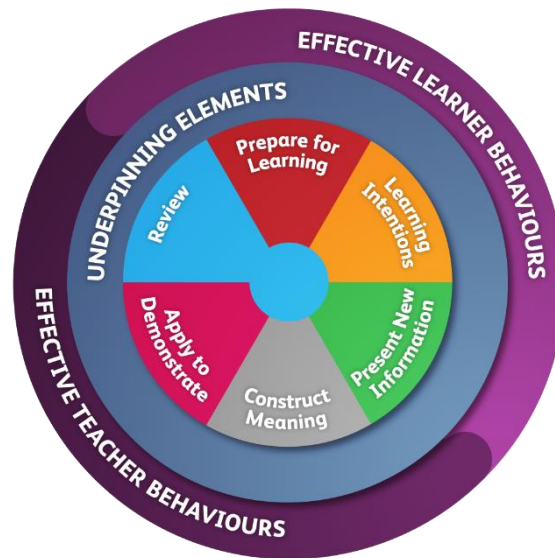
TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME (TEEP)

TEEP is a pedagogical framework and training programme when we brought together teachers to validate existing good practice, reinvigorate our approach to teaching and learning and bring about a positive culture shift in our school.

Engaging with TEEP addresses the problem of ineffective learning as a result of variation in teaching quality and school culture.

The staff in St Oliver Plunkett PS have been trained in TEEP and will use aspects of this training moving forward to enhance the teaching within the

whole school. We will monitor and evaluate its success as we move forward together.



THE 'TEEP LEARNING CYCLE' is used as a model to enable our teachers to understand the phases of learning within a lesson, or a series of lessons, putting the student at the heart of the planning process: what and how are they going to learn as opposed to what am I going to teach? It leads to relevant, purposeful and stimulating lessons.

Benefits

LEARNERS

- Are engaged more in discussion, debate and active listening.
- Are challenged, develop higher order thinking skills with improved behaviour as a result.
- Experience deeper learning overall.
- Are confident, curious learners.
- Gain transferability of skills across subject/curriculum areas.
- Develop self-regulating autonomous learners.

LEARNERS
ENJOY LEARNING

TEACHERS

- Reflect on current practice and identify areas to develop.
- Gain a deeper understanding of how learners learn.
- Become more motivated learners themselves, through a range of creative teaching techniques.
- Provides a framework to organise and make sense of previous learning/ research with a relentless focus on the learner.
- Receive subject and teaching and learning resources beyond the training.
- Receive ongoing support as part of the TEEP community: updated research, TEEP ideas.

TEACHERS
ENJOY TEACHING

SCHOOLS

- Adopt a common language of learning.
- Experience increased cross-curricular collaboration and sharing of best practice.
- Develop a holistic teaching and learning model to help drive forward whole school improvement.
- Address effective feedback/meeting the needs of all learners/pace/ challenge/questioning.

SCHOOLS
ENJOY TEACHING
AND LEARNING

