

Teaching and Learning Policy

In Ashgrove Nursery School, we are aware that the central purpose and focus of our work is to meet the needs of each individual learner and to help each child realise his/her full potential.

'To ensure that every learner fulfils his or her full potential at each stage of her or his development'.
Every School a Good School. A Policy for School Improvement, DENI, 2009

What is Teaching and Learning?

High quality teaching and learning is at the heart of the educational process and the quality of interaction amongst all involved is of fundamental importance in raising standards.

The quality of teaching and learning is at the heart of school improvement. Real and lasting change can only come from what Teachers and Nursery Assistants do consistently in classrooms and learning areas inside and outside of the school.

Scope and Purpose

The purpose of this Teaching and Learning Policy is to outline how, based on our core values and beliefs, we endeavour to determine how we might improve our practice as a staff and recognise the importance of the involvement of parents and Governors. It details the role of the Staff in providing teaching and learning of the highest quality to each and every child enrolled at our Nursery School.

The role and influence of the Staff are crucial factors in the promotion of high quality teaching and learning. We endeavour to evaluate processes and practices by constantly monitoring, reviewing and adjusting in the light of self-evaluation and outcomes.

Through this process, our Nursery is committed to continuous self-improvement. There is an evolving teaching and learning culture in our Nursery School which is constantly being nourished and developed, with Staff taking individual and collective responsibility to improve, with reference to the best knowledge and practice available, and a commitment to regular self-evaluation.

Core values relating to teaching and learning

Our policy on teaching and learning will share an agreed philosophy and language. It will embrace teaching and learning styles, teaching skills, climate, resources for learning, professional development and support, as well as self-evaluation and review. From all of this, a unity of purpose will be established, leading to consistency of educational practice in our Staff.

Principal factors in successful teaching and learning

- **Learning styles**
Awareness of multiple abilities, the need for differentiation and independent learning.
- **Effective planning**
Continuity and progression, the organisation of short, medium and long-term planning.

- **High expectations and appropriate challenge**
Appropriate tasks and teaching organisation, reflecting a balance between the children's right to choose and be in control of their own learning, and the Staff's responsibility to ensure that all children experience breadth, balance and progression.
- **Function of the adult**
The adult is a guide and facilitator. Intervention will be of a supportive nature. The adult's skill lies in the provision of appropriate materials for learning, and the structuring of the classroom context, both social and intellectual, making learning more conducive and attractive.
- **Intervention**
Adult intervention can improve children's cognitive, language and social development. The critical issue here is that the kinds of interaction used by our staff must be both supportive and responsive to the children's needs and potential.
- **Use of assessment**
Assessments will provide us with a rich context of learning, providing opportunities for the adult to observe the child as an individual and to plan future steps in progressive learning. Quality play experiences can reveal things about children, not visible in other contexts.
- **Creating a stimulating learning environment**
Establishing effective classroom organisation with interactive and relevant displays and interest areas – an up-to-date climate of activity (as financially viable), in which parents can also participate.
- **Monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning**
This process will occur on a daily, weekly and monthly basis through the collection of evidence, the response of children and adults and our critical reflection through rigorous self-reflection on policies and practices. Accurate records will be kept (*See Planning and Assessment Folders*) and Action Plans will be developed and updated.
- **Professional development**
The Nursery practitioners' role is all encompassing and as such, there is a need to stand back and evaluate what is actually happening on a regular basis. There will be clear opportunities to enhance Staff's own

professionalism, widen their expertise and thus lead to a greater understanding of how effective teaching and learning can be achieved.

Qualities and characteristics of an effective Teacher/Nursery Assistant

- Good understanding of self and of interpersonal relationships with children and adults
- Generosity of spirit
- Sense of humour
- Keen observational powers
- Interest in and concern for others
- Infectious enthusiasm for what is planned
- Imagination
- Energy
- Intellectual curiosity
- Professional growth and understanding of how children learn
- Ability to secure appropriate learning opportunities for particular groups and individuals
- Understanding of the Nursery curriculum and the range of experiences possible.

Assessment of Learning

(*See also Record Keeping Policy*)

As a Staff, we recognise the importance of assessment as the starting point for curriculum development. This needs to be formative, summative, diagnostic, evaluative and informative.

- **Formative**
Provides Staff with information about a child's interests, aptitudes, needs, learning styles and emerging areas for development.
- **Diagnostic**
Goes a stage further and enables Staff to identify matters for support and to plan

future strategies which are carefully matched to a child's learning styles and existing strengths.

- **Summative**
Gives us a snapshot of attainment at a particular point in time.
- **Evaluative and Informative**
Provides essential feedback which can be used to promote critical reflection on practice and can provide evidence for recording and reporting to parents and other professionals.

The holistic approach to assessment enables us as a Staff to provide challenging activities and experiences and in order to plan for continuity and progression.

Guiding Principles on Assessment in our Nursery School

- Record keeping procedures will take account of the whole child.
- Assessment procedures must take account of the diversity of young children.
- Assessment is a continuous process carried out by observation during the course of children's every day activities.
- Assessment is team-based involving teachers, assistants, parents, other professionals and the child.
- Record keeping is essential to evaluate the curriculum and to assess the children's progress.
- Emphasis will be on the child's own progress, not in relation to other children.

Key elements in Teaching and Learning

- The promotion of self-esteem is absolutely vital to the teaching and learning process.
- Actions and targets have to be based on varying pupil abilities and aptitudes.

- Learning experiences for children will be planned so that all talents and interests are addressed, allowing all children to achieve their full potential.
- A stimulating learning environment is conducive to developing positive attitudes to learning.
- Children are encouraged to make choices and to experiment without fear of failure.
- Children's questions are encouraged to further develop inquiry, exploration, thinking and reasoning.
- Opportunities to work individually and collectively are planned to establish a variety of play situations in order for each child to develop socially, emotionally and intellectually.

Attitudes and Dispositions

We recognise very clearly in our Nursery School that self-esteem - the collection of beliefs or feelings that children have about themselves - is a key element in teaching for effective learning.

The concept of success following persistence starts early. Self-esteem fluctuates as a child grows, as it is affected by a child's experiences and new perceptions.

We, as a Staff, will be sensitive to the feelings and emotions of children under our education and care. We will seek the support of all adults, including parents; in nurturing self-esteem (*See also Positive Behaviour Policy*).

Success comes from promoting self-esteem and high expectations simultaneously, but this is very demanding and is something that teachers and parents need to work together to achieve.

Central to all policies, procedures and organisational structures are approaches to teaching and learning. The foundations of the culture we are endeavouring to achieve lie in the values and beliefs which bind the Staff together in striving to improve practice and quality provision for all our children.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This Policy will be monitored in an ongoing way within the self-evaluative culture of the school.

See also:

- Curriculum Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Record Keeping Policy

- Positive Behaviour Policy

Striving for high quality Teaching and Learning is at the heart of school improvement and at Ashgrove Nursery School we will continue to develop an informed understanding of the processes contained in Teaching and Learning in order to provide the best possible start for children along their educational path.

This Policy was adopted by the Governors on 01/08/15.

It was last reviewed on 15th May 2024 and will be further reviewed on Jan 26