

Ashford CE Primary School



Learning and Teaching Policy

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Learning and Teaching Policy

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”
(Nelson Mandela)

Vision and Values Statement:

We are a caring Christian community where everyone feels valued, safe and adopts an "I can" attitude. All we do is underpinned by our Christian values which means we celebrate individuality and achievements through mutual respect and high aspirations. We believe that each one of us has the ability to achieve our highest potential and dreams, through a journey of life-long learning.

Aims and Key Principles

Our Learning and Teaching policy aims to ensure that the children at our school are provided with high quality learning experiences that lead to a consistently high level of pupil achievement. We strive to provide our children with an education that is both enjoyable and inspirational; it is tailored to the children's needs and interests, providing them with a skill set that will make them a life-long learner.

This policy sets out clear expectations, provides a consistent approach, can be easily monitored and is aimed at ensuring equal opportunity for all our pupils.

We will ensure that our curriculum is memorable and relevant. Through our planning, engagement with children, creative use of resources and personnel, professional development and training, we will aim to make learning and teaching at Ashford CE Primary School of a consistently high standard. By adopting a whole school approach to learning and teaching across our school we aim:

- to provide consistency of teaching and learning across key stages
- to enable teachers to teach as effectively as possible.
- to enable children to learn as efficiently as possible.
- to give children the skills they require to become effective lifelong learners.
- to provide an inclusive education for all children.
- to learn from each other through the adoption of a collaborative, enquiry based approach to learning and teaching where good practice is shared.

There is no single recipe for effective learning and teaching in our school. However, this policy outlines some of the key elements, which are at the centre to raising standards in learning and teaching. It also sets out a broad structure for lessons, linked to how we best learn. When reading this policy it is important to remember that adopting a broad template for structuring lessons does not preclude:

- Spontaneity
- Creativity
- Imagination
- Individuality

We aim to put our children at the centre of their own learning and place great emphasis on nurturing skills and attitudes such as resourcefulness, resilience and co-operation. We recognise the importance of making learning meaningful and memorable and endeavour to provide our children with amazing learning experiences.

Learning and Teaching at Ashford CE

At Ashford C E School we truly believe that being able to learn is the greatest gift that humans possess. We are preparing children to be adults in a world that we don't understand yet. We fully acknowledge that people learn in many different ways, and when planning our lessons, we take into account these different learning styles and each teacher strives to ensure the needs of individual pupils are met in each lesson. At Ashford CE our teachers are facilitators of learning opportunities.

Through our teaching we aim to:

- Meet the needs of all learning styles i.e. visual, auditory and kinaesthetic.
- Take into account prior learning and start new learning based on what they already know and what they are interested in finding out.
- 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, in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people.
- Provide environments that are engaging, safe and purposeful. That the behaviour for learning is embedded in every classroom.
- Plan a progressive skill set, to prepare the children for adult life and the world of work.
- Enable children to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this.
- Help children grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens.

Developing Learning Objectives

All lessons should be planned with clear learning objectives. These objectives should focus on what is to be learned and should not be an identification of tasks to be completed by students. Learning objectives should, where possible, highlight a skill that is being developed so students can make links between study skills being acquired in other subject areas. Learning objectives should make a clear distinction between skills being developed and the acquisition of subject knowledge.

Although all lessons should have clear learning objectives; how and when these are to be shared with pupils is at the professional discretion of the teacher. Learning objectives may be written on the board, flashed up by a projector or be explicitly referred to orally.

Setting success criteria

Setting success criteria is an essential part of the objective setting process. Success criteria should inform students of what they need to do in order to meet the learning objectives. Good success criteria are an essential part of the formative assessment process as they allow students and teachers to judge how well students have performed and highlight what they need to do to make progress. As such, success criteria provide the framework for providing effective feedback.

The role of feedback

Children learn and develop best when they:

- Know what they need to do in order to succeed.
- Feel they can do more.
- Explained what they have learned.
- Apply their knowledge it to other situations.
- Teach it to someone else.
- Are challenged appropriately
- Feel good about themselves.

We, as teachers, facilitate this by powerful feedback and next steps marking. In order to become independent learners, students need to be informed about their learning. The teacher plays a crucial role in this process. By ensuring a student has a clear understanding of the learning objectives and the success criteria the teacher can then help guide the student through the next stage in their learning journey. This advice can take many forms, for example, general class feedback, a personal discussion or comments written on a piece of work. This list is not exhaustive.

Feedback should provide information about generic study skills as well as the acquisition of subject knowledge. But most importantly feedback should provide guidance on how to make progress. We use the two stars and wish process to celebrate achievements and give SMART targets for improvement. Children should be given time to reflect over feedback and marking and self-evaluate by traffic lighting and leaving reflective comments.

Engineering effective discussions, tasks and activities that elicit evidence of learning

In order to learn effectively it is important that all students are actively engaged in tasks that stretch and challenge them. Some principles are outlined below; however, once again the list is not exhaustive and the application of strategies is at the professional discretion of the teacher.

Engineering effective discussions; careful thought needs to be put into planning the role that talk has in lessons. Techniques such as no-hands questioning, employing wait time or asking for a student to summarise a discussion can lead to whole class engagement.

Engineering effective tasks and activities; careful thought needs to be put into planning the work that students will do. For example, carefully organised group work using the principles of Co-operative Learning can ensure that all students are engaged.

Eliciting evidence of learning; a key challenge for teachers is to ensure that classroom activities provide opportunities for students to exhibit their learning so that teachers and students can make informed decisions about the form and amount of progress being made.

For further information regarding progressive skills, please ask to see the school's thematic progression of skills plans.

Expectations

We know that effective learning requires effective teaching. When teaching we focus on motivating the children and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. For effective teaching to take place there are a number of 'ingredients' that we feel are needed and

that all teaching staff at Ashford CE should utilise and ensure are features of their teaching and lessons;

- Effective prior preparation and planning resulting in a purposeful, well prepared learning journey.
- Clear steps to success that are shared with the children both visually and orally.
- A clear link to previous and future learning.
- Links to the real world experiences and interests of the children.
- A review of the learning throughout the learning journey.
- Appropriate challenge for all children.
- Teacher modelling through effective use of 'teacher talk' time.
- Quality Interaction between teacher and pupil and pupil and pupil.
- Appropriate pace.
- Enthusiasm and engagement for all.
- Fun and memorable delivery, content and outcome.
- Excellent behaviour management
- Opportunities for independent learning
- Follow up feedback through effective, interactive marking

Our approach to effective learning and teaching

- Our teaching is based on our knowledge of children's level of attainment, previous experiences, interests and skills.
- We have high expectations of all children. We take into account ability and any additional educational needs.
- We set targets for the children and the review of these is an ongoing process. Children are set new targets as and when appropriate
- Lessons are planned with clear learning steps that form part of the overall learning journey and we evaluate all lessons so that we constantly look for opportunities to improve our teaching.
- We treat all children with kindness and respect. We treat them fairly and give them equal opportunities to take part in class activities.
- All our staff follow the school policy with regard to school discipline and pupil behaviour.
- We deploy teaching and learning assistants to maximise outcome for all pupils.
- All our staff reflect on their strengths and areas of development through the Performance management and appraisal cycle.
- Staff have responsibility for key areas of learning and support other staff to develop their skills in these areas.
- We teach daily phonics through Letters and Sounds and Support 4 Spelling
- Children sometimes work in small intervention groups outside the classroom with an adult to boost their learning.
- Pupil Voice in our school is very strong and we have a very active School Council who are regularly consulted on school choices and decisions.

Our School Curriculum

At Ashford CE we aim to enthuse, excite and challenge our pupils with rich and varied educational experiences. We provide our pupils with opportunities to question, explore and evolve their learning through practical and skilled based activities, tailored to their needs. We encourage positivity and pride in our work. We aim for the best and to give our pupils a skill set that enable them to conquer new challenges and solve problems in every aspect of school life.

Our purpose is to offer a curriculum which is broad, balanced and differentiated and which meets the requirements of the Education Act relating to the National Curriculum, Religious Education and Collective Worship. We aim to ensure that children's learning is progressive and continuous.

Our Thematic Curriculum aims to:

- Set high expectations of our pupils
- Enthuse and inspire children and staff
- Give children a sense of achievement and pride in their work
- Make learning for a purpose through discovery, practical, active and exciting experiences
- Develop a progressive skills set for each child

For further details on our curriculum please see the curriculum map and curriculum pages on the school website.

Our Learning Environments

At our school we provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows both children and staff to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential. We believe that a stimulating and exciting classroom environment sets the climate for learning, it should promote independent use of resources and high-quality work by the children. We aim to make our whole school environment attractive and conducive to learners and users. Each classroom has well-ordered clearly labelled resources. We change displays regularly to ensure that the classroom reflects the themes studied by the children. We ensure that all children have the opportunity to display their work at some time during the year.

Our non-negotiables for teaching staff contain further detail regarding our display and classroom environment expectations.

Pupil Organisation

Flexible table arrangements should be used for a range of activities, including those of groups, solo, pairs. All classroom organisations should ensure that children can focus upon a central point for lessons such as whole class Literacy or Mathematics. The pupils should all have an unobstructed view of the whiteboard or any teaching aids being used.

Learning Outside the Classroom

The outdoor environment is a rich, dynamic and natural space for learning and development in children of all ages. We recognise its value as an essential learning resource. Being outdoors has a positive impact on children's sense of well-being and helps all aspects of children's development. It offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It gives children first-hand contact with weather, seasons and the natural world. Outdoor environments offer children freedom to explore, use their senses, and be physically active.

The outdoor environment is where children can come into contact with the ever changing systems of nature and the four elements. It is the dynamic world of living and non-living things that endlessly interact through time and space. The outdoor environment usually offers more freedom and space to move, and inspires different movement from that indoors. This is vital for young children to develop their coordination, build muscle mass and experiment with moving their bodies.

Educational Trips and Visitors

We believe that our curriculum is enriched by first-hand experiences, including visits locally and further afield, contributions from adults with knowledge and skills that can enhance pupils' learning, and an extensive range of extra-curricular activities. We fully recognise that learning outside the classroom helps to bring the curriculum to life – it provides deeper subject learning and increases self-confidence. We provide a wide range of experiences across the school and every year group takes full advantage of inviting visitors into school or taking children on educational visits to enhance the learning experience of every topic they cover. We also recognise the many benefits gained by students who take part in educational and residential school journeys. At Ashford CE we provide an opportunity for our Year 6 pupils to visit an activity centre as part of a week-long residential trip. We believe that this offers a range of new and unique opportunities that build self-confidence and self-esteem which is fundamental to any young person's development. Outdoor activities provide valuable alternative, often non-competitive, avenues for achievement, as well as opportunities to develop independence and self-reliance. Through successfully facing up to the challenges which outdoor activities provide, overcoming fears and apprehensions along the way, we find that our pupils make major strides in confidence, with implications for all aspects of their development.

Celebrating achievements

We take every opportunity to celebrate achievement through a range of awards including 'WOW work' and celebration assemblies, which all contribute to a healthy learning environment and the development of 'well rounded' members of our school community.

Each class/year group has allocated corridor and hall display boards. Corridor displays show the best quality work produced from a year group where other children can celebrate and aspire to being even better. Learning aids and reflective questions are clearly evident on all displays.

The Role of Senior Leadership Team and Middle Leadership Team

- Lead performance management and the appraisal process, to ensure consistent application of ethos and agreed school practice.
- Monitor effective implementation and consistency of non-negotiables and curriculum.
- Review teacher's planning and undertake formal and informal lesson observations.
- Review children's work to ensure consistency of approach and language through the scrutiny of children's books.
- Ensure pupil voice is incorporated into school life.
- Working with the School Council on specific activities to support policy (e.g. what outstanding learning looks like)

The Role of Governors

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

- Support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively.
- Ensure that the school buildings and premises are well maintained and best used to support successful learning and teaching.

- Monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations.
- Work with the Senior Leadership team to monitor how effective learning and teaching 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 learning and teaching policies through the school self-review processes.

The Role of Parents and Carers

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We work in partnership to inform and support our parents in giving their children the necessary guidance at home.

We do this by:

- Sending home curriculum overviews at the start of each half term. These are also available on the school website.
- Holding Parent Consultation Evenings to share their child's targets with parents and to explain our strategies for teaching key areas of the curriculum.
- Provide regular workshops for parents to give them strategies for supporting their children's learning.
- Offering 'Meet the Teacher' events at school.
- Provide detailed communication and up to date school events through handbooks and ACE'S HIGHlights.

We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing this policy. We work with our 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.
- Keep their child healthy and fit to attend school.
- Ensure they 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.

Safeguarding

We recognise that our school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children by providing children with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection. Opportunities for safeguarding awareness are provided throughout the curriculum to equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help. We will provide children with additional training in e-safety, anti-bullying, road safety and cycle training. Year 6 also are provided with workshops and additional support for their transition to secondary school.

Equalities Statement

Ashford CE School is committed to valuing diversity and to equality of opportunity. We aim to create and promote an environment in which pupils, parents and staff are treated fairly and with respect, and feel able to contribute to the best of their abilities.

The Governing Body recognises that no one should receive less favourable treatment than another on the grounds of gender, marital status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, religious beliefs, age, or sexual orientation. Full consideration has been given to this during the formulation of the above policy as it is the governors' aim that no-one at Ashford CE school should suffer discrimination, either directly or indirectly, or harassment on any of these grounds.