

Oakdene Primary School



Teaching and Learning Policy 2023

Policy Adapted by: L.Young/M.Weston

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Introduction

At Oakdene, 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, fun and enjoyable experience for everyone but it should also be challenging and stretch people's thinking. Through our teaching we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices in their lives. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy, rewarding and successful lives.

Aims and Objectives

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

Through our teaching we aim to:

- enable children to become confident, curious, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners
- raise children's aspiration and self-belief and encourage them to take risks and learn new things using a growth mindset approach
- building determination and resilience
- develop children's self-respect and encourage children to respect ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others
- show respect for all to promote positive attitudes towards other people
- help children build positive relationships
- enable children to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this community

Effective learning

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

- enquiry based learning
- active engagement – practical where possible
- immersive hooks
- open questions
- opportunities to practise and embed
- investigation and problem solving
- research and finding out
- group work, pair work, independent work and whole-class work

- adaptive teaching approaches
- asking and answering questions
- use of ICT
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest
- visits to the school by theatre/ workshop groups and experts in other fields
- creative activities
- watching media and responding to the material
- debates, role-plays and oral presentations
- designing and making things
- participation in athletic or physical activity
- themed weeks & WOW days

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. Growth mindset techniques are used to enable all children to be the best learners that they can be.

Effective teaching

When teaching, we focus on motivating the children and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. We use our school curriculum planning to guide our teaching as well as giving the children an opportunity to tailor the curriculum based on their own needs and interests. This sets out objectives, underpinned by the values of the school and it details what is to be taught to each year group.

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 aim high and challenge all levels of ability in every lesson. When planning work for children, we take account of their individual starting points. For children with Special Educational Needs, we give due regard to their SEND Support Plans. We have high expectations of all children.

We recognise the fact that in all classes there are children of different abilities, and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children. We are also fully aware of the need to never place a ceiling on learning. We achieve this by:

- providing adaptive tasks. Children may be given the opportunity to choose the task that they will complete so that they can challenge themselves further if they feel confident enough to do this (self-differentiation). Where necessary, teachers will help guide children when choosing their level of activity.
- setting common tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses.

- setting tasks of increasing difficulty;
- Being mindful of cognitive overload and making learning sticky.
- flexible grouping.
- providing resources of different complexity.
- using Teaching Assistants (TAs) to support all children individually or in groups.
- Reinforce a growth mindset
- Staff use a range of strategies to support working memory including visual memory, active learning, meaningful links, repetition, spaced learning and limit cognitive overload using the key principles of making learning sticky.

Planning

We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives or milestones that are taken from the National Curriculum and the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. Our lesson plans always contain key questions, adaptive tasks and they mention the support that is put in place to aid children’s learning. E.g.: the role of the Teaching Assistant, which target children the teacher will be guiding. Where necessary, we annotate planning with notes for future lessons so that we can modify and improve teaching in the future. Children are involved in all planning where their ideas and wishes are shared and considered.

Feedback and Marking

Fast feedback is an approach we will use throughout the school.

Timely and relevant feedback → evokes ideas and addresses misconceptions → moves learning forward

We recognise that there are two types of feedback – summative and formative. In assessing and marking work, we concentrate on the formative form, while using summative feedback when appropriate. Fast feedback should be given in a timely manner to children in a verbal form. On the spot feedback allows children to make decisions and reflections in the moment where it is most purposeful. This formative feedback will include one or more of the following.

- describing why an answer is correct or incorrect; explanations are key
- telling children that they have or have not achieved
- specifying, implying or modelling a better way, or the correct way, of doing something
- motivating children to suggest ways they can improve
- celebrate good mistakes

Feedback may be verbal or written and will allow the child (through discussion with the teacher) to construct the way forward. Where possible, feedback will be verbal and will be instant as this is proven to be the most effective form of feedback. Children will know the learning objectives or milestones for a piece of work and the marking will reflect progress towards this focus. Where a piece of work has been discussed between the teacher and child, VF may be written by the teacher or teaching assistant in the margin. Where possible, marking takes place with the child to allow constructive feedback to take place. Formative rather than summative feedback forms the basis of our marking practice. All teaching staff work upon the principle that the next lesson should address the next step in a child's learning.

Children are provided with opportunities to mark their own or the work of a peer. Children are expected to self-assess on their success in work as well as their next steps.

Children may be asked to undertake corrections and 'follow up' work as a result of the marking. Teachers ensure that the children take note of and carry out any corrections asked of them, for which dedicated time is allowed. Positive reinforcement through stickers and comments are used as and when appropriate, and ties into the school's use of The Oakdene Way and Class Dojo awards, with one dojo for good work, two for excellent work and three for outstanding work. Teachers' marking is appropriate to the subject and nature of the work being marked. Marking is carried out in a purple pen to ensure that the marking is clearly visible. The amount of marking is again determined by the context of the piece of work.

Children respond to their marking using a coloured pencil (EYFS, Y1 and Y2 children who have not yet secured a pen license) or green pen (Y2 to Y6) during the lesson or closely after the lesson. The teacher may wish to use written prompts in purple pen to aid their next steps.

Homework is acknowledged with a tick or a signature, or a 'like' if homework has been uploaded to Seesaw.

Work in foundation subjects will be marked within the lesson using a whole school system which will identify areas for individual pupil and whole class development. Verbal feedback on content, ability to meet the milestones, presentation, grammar, punctuation & spelling would all be acknowledged. This will be through VF or written comments which are provided 'in the moment'. All work should be looked at during or after the lesson to allow for an assessment sheet (used half-termly or per topic) to be filled out. This helps plan next steps and address misconceptions that may have arisen.

- Supply and support staff should make a note of key feedback points and common thread to support planning and assessment.
- Books should still be checked on a daily basis, if the child has not received 'fast feedback' during the lesson, their book should be placed to one side so that this can be looked at after school (this may be in the form of a conferencing 'tray' or a designated area in the classroom).

Ethos

Each of our teachers makes 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 our teachers follow the school policy regarding discipline and classroom management. We set and agree with children in our schools 'The Oakdene Way'. 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 doing so,

we help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. All staff are encouraged to have a ‘can do’ attitude and to demonstrate a ‘growth mindset’ and this is therefore instilled in all children’s attitudes to learning. We always insist on good order and behaviour. When children misbehave, we follow the guidelines for sanctions as outlined in our school Behaviour and Discipline Policy (Therapeutic Approach to Behaviour). All activities will abide by the Keeping Children Safe in Education documentation. When we plan to take children out of school, we first inform parents and obtain their permission.

Support

We deploy Teaching 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. They also lead intervention and pastoral work throughout the school, following a timetable and programme of planning which is provided by the teacher and SENCO.

Learning Environment

Our classrooms are attractive, immersive learning environments that showcase current topics being studied. We ensure that all children can display their best work at some time during the year which is placed on the centralised whole school displays. All classrooms have a range of dictionaries and fiction and non-fiction books. Reading areas are prominent in every classroom, as well as displays relating to English, Maths, vocabulary and grammar. Working Walls for English (titled ‘Road to Writing’) and maths (titled ‘Mastering Maths’) are used and these regularly contain current title; success criteria/milestones; vocabulary related to the topic; any questions from children; exemplified product (What A Good One Looks Like – WAGOLL) or an example of a poor one (What a Poor One Looks Like- WAPOLL). Working walls must be kept relevant, simple and relate to children’s learning.

Further displays that are found in every classroom include: Growth mindset; RWI Phonics in EYFS to Year 3; Zones of Regulation; The Oakdene Way – Values & 3Rs; pupil responsibilities; class reading challenge; a current Topic display. 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.

All our teachers reflect on their strengths and areas for development and plan their professional development needs accordingly. We do all we can to support our teachers 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.

TOPIC DISPLAYS WILL SHOWCASE OUR CURRENT LEARNING. THIS DISPLAY WILL HIGHLIGHT CHILDREN’S WORK ON THE TOPIC AND INCLUDE PHOTOGRAPHS, CAPTIONS, EXPLANATIONS OF A PROCESS, VOCABULARY, PUPIL VOICE AND INFORMATION SUCH AS ENQUIRY QUESTIONS, TIMELINES OR EVIDENCE. CLASSROOMS WILL ALSO DISPLAY TABLE TOP DISPLAYS THAT CAN INCLUDE ITEMS OF INTERESTS SUCH AS PRIMARY OR SECONDARY SOURCES, TOPIC BOOKS, INTERACTIVE ELEMENTS OR ACTIVITIES AND ANY OTHER STIMULUS RELEVANT FOR USE BY THE CHILDREN. WE LOVE TO SEE CHILDREN WRITING THEIR OWN LABELS AND CAPTIONS AS WELL AS TEACHERS COMMENTS ON PROCESS AND DEVELOPMENT OF KEY SKILLS IN THE TOPIC. THE DISPLAYS WILL BE FOCUSED ON THE TOPIC AND WILL BE OF HIGH QUALITY. THEY WILL BE EXCITING AND CREATIVE AND A REPRESENTATION OF THE STANDARDS IN OUR SUBJECT.

Displays:

- Displays are a celebration of excellence in our school and need to be of the highest quality.

Tips on the finer details:

- Boards will be lined with fresh, unmarked paper or hessian in a neutral palette of colours agreed by each Key Stage.
- All displays consist of a double scalloped border. **The Colour of border has been decided by each Key Stage.**
- Font used on any displays must be the school's handwriting font which is from Letter-join or Calibri.
- Working walls must reflect the current sequence / learning journey of work/ milestones.
- Working walls must show the journey of the sequence of work and be a collection of teachers and pupil's work. WAGOLs and WAPOLs.
- Whole class and shared/modelled writing can be displayed around but not on working walls unless this forms part of a neatly presented 'plot point journey.'
- Anything being put up as part of a display or on the wall as a sign will be backed with a different coloured card or paper.
- The border around the work should be the same size all the way round.
- Double-backing on corridors only and artwork – not inside classrooms unless you want to.
- Make sure all work is cut with the guillotine and is straight as well as the same size all the way around.
- All displays should be interactive and contain enquiry-based questions and prompts – using the school agreed signs and font unless handwritten.
- Topic displays should include secondary sources, resources and topic themed books where possible. Images of children working, and their own hand-written labels, captions and written work should also be included.
- Computer or handwritten labels will be used for headings, explanations and titles. Ensure use of TWINKL is avoided here.
- Special pens and paper will be used for displays, all of which will be colour-coordinated.
- Displays will be bright and evoke interest and include 3D when possible.
- Teachers will try to be as original as possible with their ideas.
- Only final copies will be displayed, unless the display is an interactive working display. Or unless this models improvement or progress made in a particular subject.
- Work will be displayed using a staple gun and not drawing pins (on the boards). We will try not to staple through children's work and make sure the staple is at an angle to ease removal. On the walls, Blu tack will be used; please ensure that all 4 corners have either staples or Blu tack on them, so they don't curl at the edges.

- Staff will keep displays tidy and not allow them to look untidy because the border is coming off, etc.
- Some displays will be celebrating children's work, others will be used as teaching prompts; nonetheless, posters should be stuck on the wall rather than use up valuable display space on the boards. No flip chart paper.
- Staff will put cutters back in safe place and not leave in communal areas such as corridors or group rooms.
- Topic displays should be an opportunity to produce a display of the highest standard and should be a WOW!
- Staples will not be used on walls, wooden surfaces or any plaster work inside the classroom or corridors. These damages the surface of the school. Also be aware of potential hazards of Asbestos.
- Blu tack will be removed from all walls before placing up a new display.

Displays in the corridors and hall:

- The same as above.
- These displays relate to our focus subjects or areas of whole school development.
- Work will be double mounted, and a paper cutter used.
- Displays will have a subject focus.
- Most displays will change to reflect current topics / genres in literacy / whole school themes being studied.

The role of Governors

Our governors determine, 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 in the light of 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. These include an annual report from subject leaders and the Headteacher's termly written report to governors as well as a review of the in-service training sessions attended by our staff.

The role of parents/carers

We believe that parents/carers have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We do all we can to inform parents/carers about what and how their children are learning by:

- holding parents' meetings / workshops to explain our school strategies for teaching, as appropriate and when required
- sharing information with parents/carers at the start of each term, when we outline the programmes of study that the children will be following during the term at school
- sending regular reports to parents/carers in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can improve further
- explaining to parents/carers how they can support their children with homework, in line with homework guidelines

We believe that it is the responsibility of parents/carers to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. Parents/ carers have a responsibility to:

- ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible
- ensure that their child is best equipped for school with the correct uniform, PE kit, book bag, reading folder and homework folder
- keep their child healthy and fit to attend school
- inform school if there are any matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance of behaviour at school
- promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general
- fulfil the requirements set out in the Home/School Agreement

Monitoring and review

We review the 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. The Senior Leadership Team monitors teaching and learning as part of school self-evaluation. The views of stakeholders, evaluation and any other relevant factors will be considered in review of this policy.

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Review by: SLT September 2023

The Oakdene Way for Displays:

Literacy:

Working wall:

- Title clearly showing text type focus
- New word(s) of the topic displayed on working wall
- Success criteria for text type displayed (gateway and mastery keys)
- Images where possible to evoke creative vocabulary and boost SEND provision
- WAGOLL displayed (this can be the teacher model built on lesson by lesson, typed or handwritten)
- Vocabulary generated as a class for easy reference by the children
- Evidence of children's work for example using/practising sentences e.g. post it notes

Other:

- Display linked to current spelling focus
- Display linked to current handwriting focus

Maths

- Title to show current topic
- Key vocabulary displayed
- Reasoning question and answer stems
- Focus times table displayed with relevant resource to aid the learning (counting stick, number line)
- Worked examples to show clear sequence of learning across the unit – presentation to reflect presentation policy e.g. use of ruler and 1 number per square
- Evidence of learning sequence using CPA models and linking bar models.
- Place value columns
- 5-a-day help board with steps to success
- Additional greater depth challenges

Topic (Geography/History)

- Title
- Key questions displayed, overarching enquiry question leading unit and key question of each lesson
- Key vocabulary
- Interactive nature to display
- Photos
- Examples of children's work

Reading Corner

- Cosy, attractive areas to sit and relax (cushions, rugs, soft furnishings)
- Teacher and TA recommended books displayed
- Selections to be clearly labelled and include: poetry, non-fiction, new releases, reading road map books
- Some displays to show specific genre of books or books by specific authors
- Class scrap book to be displayed
- Newspapers and comics displayed
- Current class read displayed
- Displays to reflect a love of reading and generate excitement for books, language which may include key quotes and thought-provoking questions
- Story reels / story spoons / story bags / puppets for re-telling stories / phonics flash cards etc
- Books to be rotated through phases included reading road map