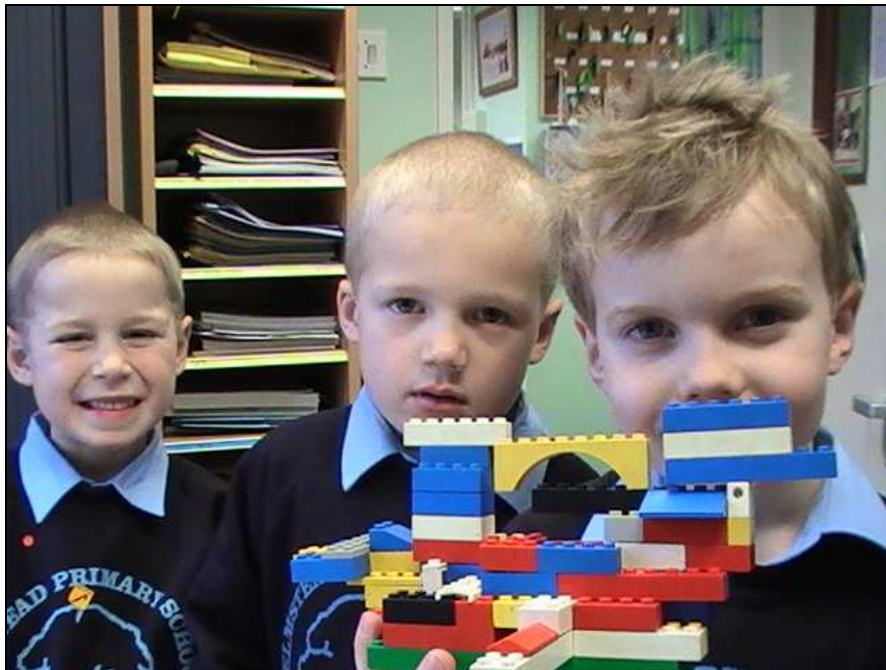


ELMSTEAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

POLICY
FOR
THE QUALITY
OF
TEACHING AND LEARNING



Revised Autumn Term, 2010
(Review co-ordinated by Clive Middleditch)

Elmstead Primary School
Holly Way
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Elmstead Primary School

**QUALITY
OF
TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY**

*Two roads diverged in a wood, and I-
I took the one less travelled by,
And that has made all the difference.*

Robert Frost

INTRODUCTION

We must keep asking ourselves the following questions:

- What exactly do we believe our school, Elmstead Primary School, to be about?
- Where are we going?
- Where do we want to get to?
- Do we know our school?
- In what context do we work?
- Do our school aims actually match what is happening here?
- Is our policy clear about what we are educating our pupils for?
- **Is our school about learning, or is it about teaching?**

To be of any value this Quality of Teaching and Learning Policy must focus our attention on **learning**, causing a ripple effect that affects our ideas of what we all think education is about!

This policy is therefore a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for teaching and learning at our school. It was developed during a thorough process of discussion and consultation with teaching and non-teaching staff, governors, advisors and pupils, but must not be seen as the completed document. It is a working document and requires reviewing every year, as it underpins everything that we are trying to achieve.

This policy also considers the requirements of the Equality Act, 2010, with the main elements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to:

- eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it;
- foster good relations across all characteristics – between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The duty to have ‘due regard’ to equality considerations means that whenever significant decisions are being made, or policies developed, thought must be given to the equality implications.

This policy, alongside – for example, policies for behaviour, child protection and quality of teaching and learning – focus on our school’s effectiveness in increasing our ability to eliminate discrimination, reduce bullying and so on. Feedback from pupils and parents certainly plays a key part here. For example, the SEND Focus Group (previously the AfA Focus Group) have on their agenda ‘equality of opportunity’ as a fundamental principle.

RATIONALE

Learning is the purpose of our school. It is the method through which we deliver a broad and balanced curriculum that challenges all the children. This document lays the foundations for the whole curriculum, both formal and informal and is the context in which all other policy statements should be read. It is written for the benefit of all members of the school community to ensure that all are aware of the fundamental principles underpinning the work of our school.

This policy also recognises the importance of the Every Child Matters Agenda and Achievement for All Project:

If every child matters then the following five strands are an essential element of any monitoring process. During lesson observations, for example, it is helpful to make reference to these questions, which are incorporated into the General Lesson Observation Report:

Enjoy and Achieve:

- How well are all pupils learning in this classroom?
- Do pupils attend well and enjoy being members of this class?
- Do all pupils work towards achieving high standards?

Stay Safe:

- Is the classroom a safe and secure environment where the pupils can learn?

Be Healthy:

- How well do the adults in the classroom care for the pupils?
- Do the adults in the classroom positively promote healthy lifestyles?

Make a Positive Contribution:

- Is there provision, in the classroom, for the pupils to participate in a decision making process to choose positive behaviours and relationships with others? (Pupil voice)

Achieve Economic Well-Being:

- How well do the adults in the classroom, as members of a learning community, encourage pupils to realise their potential and develop positively?

AIMS

Our aims for teaching and learning are that all children will:

- be tolerant and understanding with respect for the rights, views and property of others;
- develop a responsible and independent attitude towards work and towards their roles in society;
- achieve their potential in terms of academic achievement, aesthetic appreciation and spiritual awareness.

PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

We see teaching and learning as a process of co-operative teamwork and welcome and encourage the involvement of parents and others in the community, in and around Elmstead Market.

RESPONSIBILITIES

All members of the school community (teaching and non-teaching staff, parents, pupils and governors) **work toward the school's aims by:**

- valuing children as individuals and respecting their rights, values and beliefs;
- fostering and promoting good relationships and a sense of belonging to the school community;
- providing a well ordered environment in which all are fully aware of behavioural expectations;
- offering equal opportunities in all aspects of school life and recognising the importance of different cultures;
- encouraging, praising and positively reinforcing good relationships, behaviour and work.

Teachers work toward the school's aims by:

- providing a challenging and stimulating programme of study designed to enable all children to reach the highest standards of personal achievement;
- recognising and being constantly aware of the needs of each individual child according to ability and aptitude – Achievement for All;
- ensuring that learning is progressive and continuous;
- being a good role model – punctual, well prepared and organised;
- meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum;
- maintaining up-to-date subject knowledge;
- having a positive attitude to change and the development of their own expertise;
- establishing links with the local community, to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life;
- working collaboratively with a shared philosophy and commonality of practice.

Pupils work toward the school's aims by:

- attending school in good health maintained by adequate diet, exercise and sleep; (appropriate consideration also needs to be given to any child suffering from chronic sickness).
- attending school regularly, avoiding holidays during term time;
- being punctual and ready to begin lessons on time;

- being organised – bringing necessary kit, taking the Friday weekly newsletter and letters home promptly, returning reading books regularly;
- conducting themselves in an orderly manner in line with the expected code of discipline;
- taking growing responsibility for their own learning.

Parents work toward the school’s aims by:

- ensuring that children attend school in good health, regularly and punctually;
- providing support for the discipline within the school and for the teacher’s role;
- being realistic about their children’s abilities and offering encouragement and praise;
- participating in discussions concerning their child’s progress and attainments;
- ensuring early contact with school to discuss matters which affect a child’s happiness, progress and behaviour;
- giving due importance to homework, which will include reading with their children and assisting in learning of tables and spellings when required;
- allowing their children to take increasing responsibility as they progress throughout the school.

PROCEDURES

Our school curriculum, is designed to ensure a broad and balanced programme of education, with planning based upon a mixture of the QCA schemes of work and school resourced schemes. This means that both Key Stages 1 and 2 comply with the National Curriculum, using a developing range of resources and approaches. Appropriate time is allocated to each subject with flexibility for foundation and extension work.

STRUCTURES

The predominant mode of working is a balance of group work, individual work and whole class teaching. Within this structure:

- whole class teaching is linked with group work, although both presenting and modelling tasks before group work, and offering plenary sessions;
- groups are normally of matched ability, although mixed ability grouping often occurs. Grouping is according to need and will not be the same all the time;
- the importance of paired work, and attention to careful matching of pupils, is given due care;
- relevant discussion is encouraged, although some periods of the day are set aside for silent work, particularly when using the refurbished library.
- Class teachers and TAs work within four teams (eg Years 3 and 4) to enable close monitoring of pupil progress over a two year period.

The role of specialist teaching is:

- pupils with special educational needs, are monitored not only by the classroom teacher, but by the special educational needs co-ordinator, who is responsible for arranging support, both in the classroom and in withdrawn groups. Support will be from the SENCO, Learning Support Assistants, Teaching Assistants and any voluntary helpers. More able children are also identified and monitored, with extra support in Years 1 and 2 from the Head Teacher, and in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, from a specialist extension group teacher. SEND and Talented and Gifted Registers are maintained, with both kept in the Head Teacher's office.

Classroom help is available in:

- the form of Teaching Assistants, deployed at the discretion of the Class Teacher and Head Teacher;
- volunteer helpers assist in the classroom, on visits and school outings, and other activities;
- secondary school pupils are accepted on work experience and students on teaching practise.

QCA and school resourced schemes of work are used to support the teaching of all subjects within the National Curriculum. Commercial schemes are also purchased and integrated where appropriate.

Homework is considered to be a valuable element of the teaching and learning process, therefore:

- parents will be given guidance on the nature of tasks;
- children are encouraged to work at home on a regular basis;
- homework may involve parent and child completing tasks together (e.g. survey, or a particular TV programme);
- children may have multiplication or spellings to practice at home, as appropriate;
- homework tasks will be given to children to help them prepare for life at secondary school;
- further practise in basic skills (e.g. handwriting) may be set at the discretion of class teachers.

The emphasis of our Teaching and Learning Policy is on first hand experience and we encourage children increasingly to take control of their own learning. Thus:

- investigative work is common;
- children are encouraged to communicate their findings in a variety of ways;
- opportunities are provided for children to become involved in decision making;
- children are encouraged to identify audience and purpose for a range of language work across the curriculum.

Excellence is celebrated in display and performance. For example:

- each child is given an opportunity to have work of individual high standard displayed at some time in the school year;
- sustained effort including drafting and reworking as appropriate is encouraged to enhance standards;
- school events such as Christmas shows are seen as opportunities for all pupils to demonstrate their own best performance;
- pupils are encouraged to believe that any exhibited work should represent their highest standards of personal achievement.

STRATEGIES FOR ENSURING PROGRESS AND CONTINUITY

Planning is a process in which all teachers are involved, where:

- the foundation for curricular planning is the **School Development and Improvement Plan**, developed through a process of consultation with staff and approval by governors;
- a carefully planned and monitored curriculum ensures full coverage of the National Curriculum;
- the QCA schemes of work, supplemented by commercial schemes, are used by Subject Leaders, with a common system, of policy statements;
- planning is drawn up by individual teachers, and monitored by the headteacher on a weekly basis, in addition to Subject Leader monitoring;
- regular staff meetings are used to discuss various aspects of the curriculum and ensure consistency of approach and standards;
- the school manages the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies in line with the majority of guidelines in the NLS and NNS documents and ongoing training, whilst branching out as new innovations are pursued.

Subject Leaders have a variety of roles. They:

- take the lead in policy development and co-ordinating the use of schemes of work, designed to ensure progression and continuity in their subject throughout the school;
- analyse SATs results;
- support their colleagues in their development of detailed work plans and implementation of the schemes of work, and in assessment and record keeping activities;
- monitor progress in their subjects and advise the headteacher on action needed. For example, by reviewing planning documents, pupil outcomes and standards of attainment;
- take responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central resources for their subjects. (For foundation Subject Leaders reference should be made to the School Development and Improvement Plan);
- are given release time to allow them to support colleagues in the classroom, including lesson observations;
- are expected to keep up-to-date through reading and attending relevant courses;

- are expected to be involved in arranging for school-based in-service for their subject and for other staff to attend relevant courses.

Feedback to pupils about their own progress is achieved through response to work. Effective responses:

- may be verbal or written;
- aim to help children learn, not to find fault, and comments aim to be positive and constructive;
- are often done while a task is being carried out through discussion between child and teacher;
- to written work are sensitive and with discretion so that a child can assimilate a limited number of corrections and development at one time – this will vary according to age and ability.

Formative assessment is used to guide the progress of individual pupils. It involves identifying each child’s progress in each area of the curriculum, determining what each child has learned and what therefore should be the next stage in his/her learning. Formative assessment is mostly carried out informally, by teachers, in the course of their teaching.

Suitable opportunities for assessment include:

- discussion of progress, by using the pupil target setting books;
- individual and group presentations to the class;
- small group discussions, perhaps in the context of a practical task;
- short tests in which the teacher gives questions orally and pupils write answers (e.g. spelling and mathematics);
- specific assignments for individual pupils;
- individual discussion in which children are encouraged to appraise their own work and progress;
- individual written work;
- individual reading “conferences.”

Cross phase continuity is ensured by:

- regular liaison between Elmstead Nursery and the Foundation class teacher, and between teachers of Year 2 pupils and teachers at Key Stage 2;
- liaison meetings between the teacher of Year 6 pupils and those from prospective secondary schools;

- visits by Nursery children to the foundation class; Year 2 children to Key Stage 2 classes; and, visits by Key Stage 2 pupils to Key Stage 1;
- visits to secondary schools by Year 6 pupils;
- transfer of pupils' records of progress and summative assessment results, using Target Tracker as the common method of Colne Cluster schools.

STRATEGIES FOR RECORDING AND REPORTING

Records of progress kept for each child are:

- frequently noted, in areas like reading;
- updated termly by class teachers and contain samples of pupils' work;
- pupil target setting for each curriculum area;
- examined by class teachers at the start of each academic year as they prepare for a new class, linked to analysis of SATs results in the Summer term;
- retained throughout the child's time at the school and passed on to secondary school when pupils leave.

Reporting to parents is done termly through interviews and a written report, which is issued in the Summer term. Parents are made aware that:

- parents' interviews are held during school twilight periods, but are limited in time to ensure that teachers are not too tired to perform effectively;
- they may meet their child's teacher by appointment at any other time, to discuss particular concerns;
- computers are used for the compilation of written reports, which are sent to parents each year in the summer term;
- Target Tracker is used to predict aspirational targets, using national data for greater objectivity.

Formal summative assessment is carried out at the end of each National Curriculum Key Stage (Years 2 and 6) through the use of SATs and Teacher Assessment. This process is moderated by the Essex County Council. In addition, half term assessments are undertaken, in the core subjects and end of term assessments in the foundation subjects. On completion of this activity:

- results of individual pupils’ assessments are made available to the parents concerned;
- the overall statistical profile (but not individual results) is made available to parents, governors, LA and national government.

STRATEGIES FOR THE USE OF RESOURCES

Classroom resources are the responsibility of classroom teachers who ensure that:

- there is a range of appropriate, accessible and labelled resources available from which pupils can select materials suitable to the task in hand;
- all children know what they must not touch for reasons of safety and privacy;
- children are encouraged to act independently in choosing, collecting and returning resources where appropriate;
- children and teachers act together to establish an attractive, welcoming and well organised environment engendering respect, care and value for all resources.

Subject Leaders perform a central role in monitoring the use of resources and maintaining the resource room in a manner accessible to all staff.

Time is a resource that we value. To maximise its use:

- in the early years children’s time is carefully organised by the staff;
- as children progress throughout the school they are encouraged to take greater control of their own learning, including their use of time;
- time wasting is reduced by ensuring that tasks are made specific and clearly defined;
- all children engage in useful activities immediately upon entering the classroom and know what to do between the end of an activity and the end of a session. For example, ‘morning Maths’ is an activity that launches the start of the academic day.

Information and Communication Technology is a major resource which is used across the whole curriculum. (See ICT Policy and individual subject policies for details)

The Library is a valued resource, run by pupils, parents and staff.

Health and Safety issues are the responsibility of all who work in the school. All health and safety issues should be reported to the Head Teacher, or the appropriate Safety Representatives: the Deputy Headteacher or Bursar. There is no trade union representative, for Health and Safety, amongst the teaching staff.

