



## **Teaching and Learning Policy**

### **1 Introduction**

• **1.1** At Maple Grove we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the idea that both adults and children continue to learn new things every day throughout the course of their lives. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone. Through our teaching we aim to equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the LAT teaching and learning strategy

### **2 Aims and objectives**

• **2.1** At our school we aim to provide a rich and varied learning experience that allows children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential.

• **2.2** Through our teaching we aim to:

- 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;

- enable children to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this community;

- help children grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens.

- Our overall aim is to develop children who are effective, kind and considerate, prepared for education and life beyond Maple Grove.

### **3 Effective learning**

Through this policy we aim to ensure that children learn effectively. The characteristics of effective learning are when pupils make good progress, respond well to challenging tasks and adjust well to working in different contexts. To be effective learners children need to work in a sustained manner with commitment and enjoyment, be confident in raising questions and have perseverance when answers are not readily available. Also, children need to be able to evaluate their own work, select appropriate methods, organise the resources they need effectively and then be able to evaluate their own work. When appropriate, they also need to help each other.

• **3.1** In acquiring these characteristics, we acknowledge that children learn in many different ways and we recognize the need to develop strategies that allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them. We place an emphasis on the work of Howard Gardner who identifies seven main areas of intelligence: linguistic, logical/mathematical, visual/spatial, kinaesthetic, musical, interpersonal/group working, and interpersonal/reflective. We take into account these different forms of intelligence when planning which teaching and learning styles to employ.

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

- investigation and problem solving;
  - research and finding out;
  - group work;
  - pair work;
  - independent work;
  - whole-class work;
  - asking and answering questions;
  - use of the computer;
  - fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest;
  - creative activities;
  - watching television and responding to musical or tape-recorded material;
  - debates, role-plays and oral presentations;
  - designing and making things;
  - participation in athletic or physical activity.
- **3.3** 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.

### **4 Effective teaching**

• Effective teaching is when teachers challenge and inspire pupils, expecting the most of them. Effective teachers have good subject knowledge and are technically competent in teaching phonics and other basic skills. The best teachers will use a variety of methods to enable all pupils to learn effectively and will manage pupils well, insisting on high standards of behaviour. They will assess pupils' work thoroughly and use assessments to help and encourage pupils to overcome difficulties. Good teachers plan effectively, setting clear objectives that pupils understand and they use time, support staff and other resources effectively.

• **4.1** At Maple Grove we base our teaching on our knowledge of the children's level of attainment and we strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability. When planning work for children with special educational needs, English as a second language or gifted or talented children we give due regard to information and targets contained in the children's Individual Education Plans (IEPs) or individual records. We have high expectations of all children.

- **4.2** We set whole school, group and individual targets for children in each academic year and we share these targets with children and their parents. We review the progress of each child at the end of each term and set revised targets. (See Appendix 2 – Target setting Policy)

- **4.3** We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives. We take these objectives either from the school's schemes of work which are based on the National Curriculum 2014 and QCA schemes of work or the school literacy and numeracy strategies. Our lesson plans and flipcharts contain information about the tasks to be set, the resources needed, the strategies we will employ to make sure the needs of all pupils are met and the way we assess the children's work. We evaluate lessons so that we can modify and improve our teaching in the future.

- **4.4** All teachers work hard 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 with regard to behaviour and discipline. We set and agree with children the class code of conduct at the beginning of each academic year and 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 so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. We insist on good order and behaviour at all times. When children misbehave we follow the guidelines for sanctions as outlined in our school behaviour policy. (See Appendix 4 Behaviour and Discipline Policy)

- **4.5** We ensure that all tasks and activities that the children do are safe. When we plan to take children out of school, we first inform parents and obtain their permission. We also carry out detailed risk assessments.

- **4.6** We deploy learning support assistants, special needs assistants and other adult helpers according to identified needs across the school. Sometimes these adults work with individual children and sometimes they work with small groups. On occasion, the school's Higher Level Teaching Assistants will teach whole classes.

**4.7** All teachers reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and plan their professional development needs accordingly. The school has systematic procedures for identifying strengths and weaknesses in teaching and provides opportunities for teachers and support staff to continually improve their practice.

## **5. Approaches**

- **5.1** Much of the teaching in school will be delivered through split class teaching and strategies outlined in the teaching and learning strategy.

**5.2** In addition to employing the split class - structure to lessons the school will employ other strategies to ensure that teaching and learning in the school is as effective as possible:

- **Use of specialist teachers:** Physical Education (P.E.), Information and Communication

Technology and Music will be taught by specialist teachers. These teachers have excellent subject knowledge and will use this expertise to provide excellent teaching for children. The school will also utilise their experience in ensuring that the needs of gifted and talented pupils are met

- **Use of ability grouping and setting:** We believe that on occasion children learn best if they are working with children of a similar ability. This means that the teacher can get a very close match between what the children already know and what they

need to learn next. This ability grouping happens in two ways, firstly, within a class where the teacher puts all the children into groups based on their ability and secondly, across year groups where children from different classes are put into groups according to ability. This is called 'setting'. The school will use setting in Years 2, 5 and 6.

- **Use of booster classes:** The school will offer children opportunity to attend 'extra' classes in literacy and Numeracy if we feel that the children will benefit from them. These classes are voluntary and take place after school.

- **Collaborative learning strategies:** We believe that children can learn from each other and that we should provide regular opportunities for children to work together and share ideas. In every lesson teachers will use 'talk partners' whereby children work together to test out each others thinking and explain answers.

- **Specialist intervention for pupils with English as an additional language or Special Educational Needs:** The school's policy is to have a learning support assistant in every classroom so that pupils with individual needs can be better catered for. In addition to these assistants, the school will have specialist EAL assistants who will work in classes with significant numbers of children at an early stage of speaking English.

- **Special programmes of work for gifted and talented pupils:** the school will provide extension and acceleration programmes for more able pupils when appropriate.

## **6. Learning environment**

- **6.1** We work hard to ensure our classrooms are attractive learning environments. We change displays at least once a term, to ensure that the classroom reflects the topics studied by the children. We ensure that all children have the opportunity to display their best work at some time during the year. All classrooms have a range of dictionaries and fiction and nonfiction books, as well as displays relating to literacy and numeracy and foundation subjects. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and a well organised classroom promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by the children.

## **7 Curriculum**

- **7.1** The curriculum is all the planned activities that we organise in order to promote learning and personal growth and development. It includes not only the formal requirements of the National Curriculum, but also the range of extra-curricular activities that the school organises in order to enrich the experience of the children. It also includes the 'hidden curriculum', or what the children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave. We aim to teach children how to grow into positive, responsible people, who can work and cooperate with others while developing knowledge and skills, so that they achieve their true potential.

- The aims of our school curriculum are:

- to enable all children to learn and develop their skills to the best of their ability;

- to promote a positive attitude towards learning, so that children enjoy coming to school, and acquire a solid basis for lifelong learning;

- to teach children the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT);

- to enable children to be creative and to develop their own thinking;

- to teach children about their developing world, including how their environment and society have changed over time

- to enable children to be positive citizens in society;
- to fulfil all the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education;
- to teach children to have an awareness of their own spiritual development, and to understand right from wrong;
- to help children understand the importance of truth and fairness, so that they grow up committed to equal opportunities for all;
- to enable children to have respect for themselves and high self-esteem, and to be able to live and work co-operatively with others.

We plan our curriculum at three levels:

- 7.2.1 Whole School level – long term

• At whole school level we have an agreed curriculum map for each year group covering Year 1 to Year 6. This indicates what topics are to be taught in each term, and to which groups of children. The curriculum map is made up of schemes of work for each subject and relevant to the new NC 2014 for years 1,3,4 and 5. The schemes of work are based on the national curriculum units of work but are supplemented with ideas and resources from other commercial schemes as well as the co-coordinator's own subject knowledge. As well as these units for foundation subjects, the curriculum map also encompasses the Numeracy and Literacy strategies and the Essex exploRE syllabus for Religious Education. In addition to schemes of work our curriculum also encompasses development of key skills. These skills, we believe, form the basis of success in all aspects of school life and are vital to life-long learning. We teach key skills through all curriculum subjects, and we also develop them within the pastoral curriculum. Key skills form a cornerstone of curriculum planning throughout the school. For example, we give the children many opportunities to develop the application of number key skill in their geographical studies, and when we teach physical education we stress the importance of working with others.

- The six key skills that we aim to develop are:

- **Communication** This includes listening, speaking, reading and writing.

- **Application of number** This includes mental calculation skills, and learning how to apply these skills to solving number problems.

- **Information technology** This involves using new technology to find, analyse, interpret and present information. It also involves the skills necessary to use technology appropriately and successfully.

- **Working with others** This involves the ability to work well with others as a team member or team leader. When children are offered the opportunity to work with others, they learn to consider the views of others and to develop the social skills of co-operation and mutual understanding.

- **Improving own learning and performance** This involves children in evaluating their own performance, and understanding what they need to do next in order to improve.

- **Problem-solving** This skill involves learning how to apply common techniques to solve

problems in a variety of contexts and situations in any aspect of life.

- 7.2 .2 Year Group level – medium term

- Within our medium-term plans we give clear guidance on the objectives and teaching strategies that we use when teaching each topic. As we have adopted the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies for our school, we take our medium-term planning directly from the guidance documents. For Science, R.E and other foundation subjects

we use mid-term plans written by the co-ordinator which the teacher then annotates to make them suitable for the children within their class. A termly scheme of work exists for all subjects and these mid-term plans break down the scheme of work to ten deliverable lessons across the term.

### **7.2.3 Class level – short term**

- Our short-term plans are those that our teachers write on a weekly basis, usually annotated daily. We use these to set out the learning objectives for each session, to identify what teaching strategies will be employed, how the children will be grouped, what differentiation there will be and what resources are required. These plans are evaluated at the end of the week and used to inform future planning.

## **8. Assessment, recording and reporting**

- We believe that effective assessment provides information to improve teaching and learning. We give our children regular feedback on their learning so that they understand what it is that they need to do better. We use information collected from assessments to allow us to plan lessons based on detailed knowledge of each pupil. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability. Our lesson plans make clear the expected outcomes for each lesson. We make a note of those individual children who do not achieve at the expected level for the lesson, and we use this information when planning for the next lesson. We also keep this information as a record of progress made by the class. We give parents regular reports on their child's progress so that teachers, children and parents are all working together to raise standards for all our children.

### **8.1 Procedures used by the school**

- **National statutory tasks and tests:** These are externally produced and are taken at the end of the Key Stages 1 & 2. They enable us to compare pupils' and the school's performance against local and national benchmarks. We use this information to set targets for improvement.

- **National non-statutory tasks and tests (optional SATS):** These are externally produced and we administer them at the start and end of Years 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 to enable us to keep track of children's progress and to set targets for improvement.

- **Baseline tests:** These are teacher assessment and we apply these alongside on entry EAL assessments to children on entry to the school to establish their abilities at the beginning of their education so that we can compare actual improvement against attainment on entry to the school.

- **Foundation Stage profile:**

- **Marking:** This concentrates on learning intentions and focuses on how well the learning intention has been achieved as well as giving guidance for future improvement

- **Teacher assessment:** This is used to provide on going information about how well children are achieving in each subject. In Literary, Numeracy and Science it supports information gathered from formal tests. In all other subjects it is the main way in which judgments about children's attainment are made.

- **Annual reports:** These show assessment in all curriculum areas for all pupils.

These are written by class teachers with contributions from support teachers as well as learning assistants. School agreed tracking points and achievement of expectations are noted in all curriculum areas. The school has a statutory responsibility to inform parents of their children's progress in all subjects every year.

- Attainment profiles: These are used to show the profile of attainment within each class. They show the current levels of attainment of each group of children in **class and are used to target resources appropriate to the children's level of attainment.**

- Tracking sheets: These show the coverage completed by each child as well as their current levels of attainment and ensure that all children are monitored in each area of the curriculum. The school has an annual cycle of assessment, recording and reporting which means that across the year children's attainment in all subjects is systematically assessed

## **9. Children requiring special provision**

- **9.1** The curriculum in our school is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school. If we think it necessary to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children, then we do so in consultation with their parents. This may include children who have special needs, children with English as an additional language of children who are gifted or talented in some way.

- **9.2** If a child has a special need, our school does all it can to meet these individual needs. We comply with the requirements set out in the SEN Code of Practice. If a child displays signs of having special needs, his/her teacher consults with the school's special needs co-ordinator who will make an assessment of this need. In most instances, by differentiating the curriculum, the teacher is able to provide resources and educational opportunities which meet the child's needs within the normal class organisation. If a child's need is more severe, we consider the child for a statement of special needs, and we involve the appropriate external agencies when making this assessment. We always provide additional resources and support for children with special needs either through specialist resources, support from special need assistants or a modified curriculum. (For more information see the school's Special Needs Policy)

- **9.3** The school provides an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) for each of the children who are on the special needs register. This sets out the nature of the special need, and outlines how the schools will aim to address the need. It also sets out targets for improvement, so that we can review and monitor the progress of each child at regular intervals.

- **9.4** A number of our children have particular learning and assessment requirements, which are linked to their progress in learning English as an additional language. These Children have skills and knowledge about language similar to monolingual English-speaking children and their ability to participate in the full curriculum may be in advance of their communicative skills in English. We ensure as full access as possible to the curriculum and to assessment by:

- using accessible texts and materials that suit children's ages and levels of learning;
- providing support through ICT, video or audio materials, dictionaries and translators, readers and amanuenses;
- using the home or first language where appropriate;
- providing support from teaching assistants trained to work with multi-lingual pupils.
- Our school uses the NASSEA scales to measure English language competence for EAL children. We carry out on going recording of attainment and progress in line with agreed school procedures.
- The school has an EAL manager who is responsible for supporting teachers in meeting the needs of EAL children. This person also maintains a register of pupils receiving

support, arranges for assessments to be carried out, tracks the progress of EAL children and organises training for staff. Each year they also organise workshops for parents.

• (For more information see the school's EAL Policy)

**9.5** Within our school we recognise that we have children who could be termed 'gifted' or 'talented'. The term 'gifted' refers to a child who has a broad range of achievement at a very high level. Children who are gifted often have very well-developed learning skills. The term 'talented' refers to a child who excels in one or more specific fields, such as sport or music, but who does not perform at a high level across all areas of learning. In our planning, however, we use the terms 'more able' for children who, at a national level, are referred to as 'gifted' and 'talented'.

• One teacher co-ordinates the provision and practice within the school for more able children.

The co-ordinator's role includes:

- ensuring that the gifted and talented register is up to date;
  - monitoring teachers' planning to ensure that suitable tasks and activities are being undertaken by more able children across all curriculum areas;
  - regularly reviewing the teaching arrangements for more able and very able children;
  - monitoring the progress of more able pupils and supporting staff in the identification of more able children;
  - providing advice and support to staff on teaching and learning strategies for more able children;
  - liaising with parents, governors on issues related to more able children.
- In terms of provision for more able pupils, we give all children the opportunity to show what they know, understand and can do, and we achieve this by providing:
- a common activity that allows the children to respond at their own level;
  - an enrichment activity that broadens a child's learning in a particular skill or knowledge area;
  - an individual activity within a common theme that reflects a greater depth of understanding and higher level of attainment;
  - the opportunity for children to progress through their work at their own rate of learning;
  - withdrawing children to work with specialist teachers or on specialist programmes
  - a range of extra-curricular activities which offer more able children the opportunity to further extend their learning in a range of activities.
- We use a range of strategies to identify more able and very able children. The identification process is ongoing and begins when the child joins our school.
- (For more information see the school's Gifted and Talented Policy)

## **10 The role of parents in teaching and learning**

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

- holding termly parents' evenings to explain our school strategies for teaching and learning and to provide information about children's attainment;
- sending information to parents at the start of each term in which we outline the topics that the children will be studying;
- sending annual reports to parents in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can improve further;

- explaining to parents how they can support their children with homework. We suggest, for example, regular shared reading with very young children, and support for older children with their projects and investigative work.

- **10.2** We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school

in implementing school policies. We would like 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;
- do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school;
- 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;
- fulfil the requirements set out in the home/school agreement.

## **11. The role of Governors in teaching and learning**

The school's 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's self-review processes.
- Governors at Maple Grove are actively involved in supporting and monitoring teaching and learning.

They do this in a number of ways. They receive reports from subject leaders which gives them information about the current status of their subject. The Curriculum Committee monitors implementation of the school improvement plan, evaluates and advises on schemes of work and reviews policies. The full Advisory Board receives a termly Head of School's report. Governors also carry out focus visits to the school to look at a specific aspect of teaching and learning.

## **12 Monitoring and review**

**12.1** We are aware of the need to review the school 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