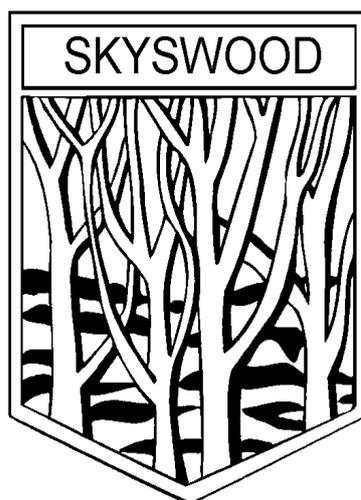


Skyswood Primary & Nursery School

Teaching and Learning Policy



June 2020

Review Date - June 2022

Introduction

Teaching and learning is at the heart of all that we do at Skyswood Primary and Nursery School. We believe in the concept of lifelong learning and that adults and children learn new things every day. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone; it should be fun. Through providing high quality learning opportunities, we 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 experiences not only help children to maximise their potential but also lead happy and rewarding lives.

Aims

At Skyswood Primary and Nursery School we aim to provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential as we believe that people learn best in different ways.

Skyswood Primary and Nursery School's vision is to provide a happy, caring and challenging environment where children will recognise and achieve their full potential, developing a love for learning in an ever-changing world.'

Effective Teaching

We seek to ensure that teachers are effective by:

- Having an expectation of high standards, both for themselves and their pupils.
- Encouraging a growth mindset approach to learning, where effort is valued and children are encouraged to 'have a go.' Children are re-assured that 'it's okay to make mistakes' and to recognise that we don't always get things right first time round and some of the most powerful learning can come from when we make mistakes.
- Working collaboratively with a shared philosophy and vision, forming positive relationships as part of our team.
- Implementing effective planning which provides for a rich and broad curriculum that is challenging but realistic, progressive and meets the needs of the 'whole' child.
- Planning lessons with clear learning objectives; marking and assessing against these in order to give children a clear indication of achievement and what they need to do to make further progress.

- Involving children in self assessment, evaluation and the identification of next steps.
- Enabling our subject leaders to provide the appropriate resources through their allocated budgets.
- Deploying Teaching Assistants, Early Years Practitioners and other adult helpers effectively.
- Providing opportunities for staff to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and planning their professional development needs accordingly so that they can continually improve their practice.
- Encouraging an environment where they feel safe to 'take risks', by trying new ways of working with their children to meet learning objectives and then sharing these with others to further build on existing practice.

Teachers use the following agreed strategies –

- Sharing clear learning objectives with the children.
- Developing a clear awareness of the skills, concepts, knowledge and attitudes implicit in the desired learning outcomes. Providing opportunities for these to be transferred and applied in different contexts
- Setting challenging but achievable targets against which progress is reviewed regularly.
- Designing differentiated learning tasks appropriate to the learner which demand the very best from each pupil, in line with our Inclusion Policy.
- Using a variety of approaches in order to cater for a range of learning styles and abilities.
- Engaging in well timed interventions.
- Deploying effective higher order questioning techniques.
- Engaging in focused teaching with individual, small groups or whole class as appropriate.
- Engaging pupils in effective collaborative group work.
- Valuing the monitoring process, both formal and informal, and the opportunities it provides for dialogue with all parties involved in a child's education, working in partnership with parents and outside agencies.

- Involving children in self evaluation and feedback procedures to help themselves and their peers.
- Being committed to continuously improving the quality of teaching.
- Creating a stimulating classroom environment to include high quality interactive displays.
- Creating a classroom climate in which the children are respected and valued, positive attitudes are encouraged and enjoyment and praise are an integral part of the learning process. Through their commitment to the development of children's confidence and self esteem.
- Making full use of the external environment to support classroom learning.
- Ensuring that all children have access to the physical environment and the breadth of the curriculum as outlined in the school's Equalities Policy.

Effective Learning

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways e.g. kinesthetic, auditory, visual etc. and we recognise the need to develop strategies that allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them. Examples of those used at Skyswood Primary and Nursery School are:

- Investigation, problem solving and independent research.
- Group, pair, independent and whole-class learning tasks.
- Open questioning.
- Using information retrieval skills.
- Visiting places of educational interest.
- Visits and presentations to enrich the curriculum (e.g. visiting authors/artists/musicians).
- Creative and open ended activities.
- Using ICT including computers, interactive white boards and a wide range of audio-visual aids.
- Role play and oral presentations.
- Music, including songs, composition, plays and shows.
- Designing and making things.
- Participation in physical activity.
- Learning from each other.
- Relevant cross curricular links.

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, specifically what helps them learn and what makes it more difficult.

We recognise the importance of an attractive and stimulating learning environment that reflects the topics/subjects studied by the children. We believe that an exciting classroom sets the climate for learning, and promotes high-quality learning from the children.

We believe in creating a learning environment where:

- Everyone is on task.
- Children are encouraged to listen to each other and value the opinions of others. Children respect each other and celebrate differences.
- Opportunities are created to build the skills of independent learning and also cooperation.
- Children feel secure enough to question and take risks without the fear of failure.
- Children appreciate each others' strengths and abilities.
- There are regular opportunities to transfer skills and knowledge.
- Learning about and showing respect for cultural diversity in school and society is valued.

Classroom Support

We support the children's learning in partnership with:

- Teaching Assistants and Early Years Practitioners who are highly trained and effectively deployed.
- SENDCO.
- Parents.
- Links with Windermere Base.
- Educational Psychologist.
- Student teachers, Schools Direct trainees, work experience students.
- Children's Centre.
- Virtual School.
- A wide range of external agencies as appropriate to a child's needs (e.g. SALT advisors, ASD support, DSPL7, St Albans Plus, LINKS Behavioural Support, Watling View Outreach support).

Home Learning

Home learning is set with due consideration given to the age and needs of each child, with the aim to support children in developing positive home learning habits and skills of time management, preparing them securely for the next phase of their education. In line with our school vision, we set out to ensure that home learning at Skyswood Primary and Nursery school reflects the five principles identified within our PRIME learning tasks. Home learning should be Purposeful, Relevant, Interesting, Manageable and Explained!

Purposeful

Tasks should have a clear learning objective and either support effective pre-learning towards a topic, consolidate concepts introduced within the class, or apply children's learning to new situations.

Relevant

Tasks should relate explicitly to the current learning within the class, as identified through the national curriculum and the school's medium term plans.

Interesting

Home learning should aim to capture the natural curiosity of primary school children and reflect our school vision; 'for children to achieve their full potential and develop a love for learning.'

Manageable

Home learning tasks should be pitched at the appropriate level for each child and be planned around the agreed timeframes for each year group. There should be opportunities within the time frame for children to request additional support from the teacher should that be necessary.

Explained

Children should be clear about the nature of each home learning task and be able to access the task in terms of their ability, and in terms of the necessary resources to successfully complete the task. Children should receive appropriate feedback on their home learning to ensure that their efforts are acknowledged and that any misconceptions are appropriately addressed.

The Role of Parents

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. The school has established strong and positive home school partnerships. We fully involve parents and inform them about what and how their children are learning by –

- Inviting all parents to work with the school in some capacity, whether it be within a classroom, in our library, accompanying visits, or as a member of FOSS or our Governing Body.
- Sending out a termly letter from each Year Group Team outlining what is to be taught, any special events, visits and opportunities for parents to be involved.
- Holding consultation evenings in the autumn and spring terms.
- Sending out a detailed annual report in which we explain the progress made by each child with an indication of how the child can improve further.
- Sharing targets set by the child and teacher at the end of each year which will be their focus in their next class.

- Communicating through our Home Learning and Reading diaries to ensure that parents are always aware of what has been set and have the opportunity to comment on any difficulties.
- Holding parent information evenings where appropriate.
- Sending out monthly newsletters.
- Analysing and responding to parent comments through our Annual Parent Questionnaires.
- Regular updating of the school website. (www.skyswood.herts.sch.uk)

The Role of Governors

Our 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 best used to support successful learning and teaching.
- Monitor how effective learning and teaching strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment.
- Monitor the effectiveness of school learning and teaching policies through the school self-review processes. These include reports from subject leaders and the regular headteacher's reports to Governors as well as a review of the in-service training sessions attended by our staff.
- Participate in termly Governor Visit Days which link to the school's key priorities for improvement.

Monitoring and Review

We review the learning and teaching policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, changes in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school.

We will know that this policy has been effective if:

- Monitoring reveals consistency in agreed strategies and desired outcomes with the result that all children are working to develop their potential throughout the school.
- Teachers use it to self assess their own performance.
- Everyone who works with our children is clear about their role in raising standards in learning and teaching.