

TEACHING & LEARNING POLICY

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Pictor Academy

Teaching and Learning Policy

Rationale

This policy reflects the school values and philosophy in relation to teaching and learning. It sets out a framework within which all staff can operate and gives guidance and information on practice within Pictor. Its purpose is to impact positively on classroom practice and ensure that it promotes high expectations of staff and pupils regarding pupil achievement, teaching standards and the learning environment.

At Pictor, we believe in the concept of life-long learning. We maintain that learning should be an enjoyable and rewarding experience for everyone. Through our teaching, 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 teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives.

Aims

- For all pupils to achieve their full potential
- For all pupils to achieve the highest level of independence and to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners.
- For all pupils to be engaged fully as active participants in their learning.
- For all pupils to develop positive self-esteem and help them to build positive relationships with other people.

Principles for Effective Teaching and Learning

These principles are based on the Teacher's Standards (DFE 2011)

- **Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils.**
 - Lessons are interesting and stimulating to the pupils.
 - Learning is meaningful to the pupils.
 - Learning is fun.
 - Teaching is age appropriate and based on pupil's ability
 - Expectations for pupils' learning should be high and challenging but achievable.
 - Clear learning objectives are set and their evaluation is used to inform future objectives and planning.
 - IEP objectives are included in lesson objectives where appropriate.
 - Staff are positive and inspiring in their body language, speech and attitudes.

- Classrooms will provide effective learning environments, including defined areas such as individual work stations, meaningful displays, and age appropriate, well maintained resources.
 - Resources within the classroom are organised, labelled and accessible to pupils to promote independence.
 - Gifted and talented pupils are identified and appropriate strategies and activities are provided.
 - Other cultures receive positive recognition through assemblies, displays, stories, themes and drama.
- **Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils.**
- Staff have excellent knowledge of the National Curriculum, Early Years and know the levels at which their pupils are working in terms of Classroom Monitor.
 - Short term planning includes differentiated teaching and Assessment for Learning Strategies.
 - Plenaries are used effectively to assess pupils' progress and their understanding of their learning. Some pupils, particularly those with ASC, may find plenaries difficult in which case teachers will use the most appropriate strategies to assess knowledge and understanding.
 - IEP targets and learning objectives within planning are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time related (SMART).
 - Opportunities are provided for pupils to engage in independent learning, according to their level of ability.
 - Class teams have a shared understanding and consistently deliver teaching and learning objectives for the pupils, strategies to be used, and progress towards achieving these objectives are discussed regularly and reviewed as appropriate.
 - Pupils are working towards sustained concentration and independence, to think and learn for themselves and ask for help independently.
 - Discussions with parents are regular and allow for a holistic view of the pupil's progress, strengths and areas for development.
 - At transition times, class teams share information to ensure new staff have a full understanding of pupils' abilities and strategies to aid learning.
 - Provision of homework activities to reinforce learning in class.
 - Objectives are shared with parents/carers so that they can support learning in the home environment. If parents have particular objectives they wish to be included, staff will discuss these and incorporate them into the IEP if appropriate.
 - Termly planning and learning links are clearly available to parents in the class aspect of the school website.
 - Liaison with parents is encouraged through the home school diary, EMail, digital contacts or telephone calls and parental visits/appointments as preferred.
 - Objectives and activities are differentiated according to need.

- Tasks are challenging and engaging in order to motivate pupils to stay on task and remain involved.
- Repetition of activities to reinforce learning.
- Questioning is used effectively, with appropriate communication strategies to allow children to respond.
- Pupil initiated learning is used by responding to pupils' interests and actions.
- Visual resources are used to support learning e.g symbols, pictures, photos, signing. Objects.
- Learning objectives are shared and evaluated with the pupils and displayed as a reminder for pupils. It should be noted that in some cases this may not be appropriate e.g personal hygiene objectives.
- A variety of teaching and learning styles are used throughout the day e.g visual, auditory, kinaesthetic.

• **Plan and Teach well-structured lessons.**

- Purposeful and effective learning environment, including appropriate and attractive resources and displays.
- Staff who are positive role models, demonstrating enthusiasm for learning during lessons.
- Differentiated learning objectives and activities matched to the individual abilities and needs of the pupils.
- All lessons have a clear focus and are well structured.
- Staff use interactive teaching in which pupils are actively involved through the use of ICT and multi-sensory approaches.
- Appropriate pace and timing is used to aid pupil attention
- Displays of pupils' work within the classrooms and around school support the curriculum. Words and symbols are used for labelling and, on some displays, the use of communication aids encourage pupil interaction.
- Opportunities to learn are available throughout the school e.g the hall, sensory room, cookery room, soft play room and within the local environment. All rooms have access to a quiet 1 to 1 room for individual or small group work.
- Pupils are informed of lesson objectives, and, in some cases, their individual targets. Objectives are delivered in a number of ways.
- Differentiated resources are used within lessons according to individual needs, including multi-sensory resources.
- Pupils are allowed time to process information and respond to questions/instructions. Prompts are used as needed. These may be visual, verbal, gestural or physical.
- Communication systems appropriate to individual pupils are used, such as photos, symbols, signing, objects of reference, electronic communication aids.
- Lessons usually contain a mix of whole class, small group and individual work. Activities are repeated in order to reinforce learning.

- Plenaries are used to discuss pupil achievement, reward good work and effort, recap and reflect and to inform pupils of the next step for the next lesson if appropriate to the child's level of understanding.
 - Lessons are structured according to the needs of individual pupils through the use of class timetables, individual timetables. "now and then" boards, and, in some cases, music and singing to indicate the start or change of an activity.
 - Teaching Assistants, students, volunteers are used effectively to support learning, both individually and in small groups. They are clear about their role within a lesson, know which pupils they are working with, understand the pupils' learning objectives and IEP targets and use appropriate communication and behaviour management strategies.
- **Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of the pupils**
 - Staff have an excellent knowledge of the levels at which pupils are working. This enables effective differentiation in teaching and learning strategies, Assessment for learning strategies (AfL), the setting of learning objectives, activities, questioning, level of support and a variety of pupil outcomes.
 - All staff have a clear understanding of the different needs and approaches to learning for pupils who have MLD, SLD, and ASC. We now cater for pupils have with PMLD at Pictor and have adapted our curriculum and approaches to meet their highly individual needs.
 - Activities are matched to the developmental levels of the pupils .i.e. sensory, play based, skills based. Resources and teaching strategies are adapted to suit all learning styles.
 - Pupils are taught in a variety of settings; whole class, small group, individual.
 - Effective communication is ensured by the use of speech, Signalong, PECS symbols, photographs, Clicker 7, PODD's and electronic communication aids.
 - Lessons are planned to take into account the appropriate pace and challenge for all pupils.

- **Make accurate and productive use of assessment**
 - Pupils have SMART targets so that progress can be measured and evaluated. Objectives are discussed by class teams so that there is consistency in understanding what is required of a pupil to be considered to have mastered a target. IEP targets are shared with parents and pupils.
 - Feedback is provided to pupils in a number of ways. Immediate feedback is given through praise and rewards. Comments may be written or stickers put in books as appropriate. During the plenary, pupils may share their good work with their peers and individual successes are celebrated. Pupils may be encouraged to visit another teacher or member of the senior leadership team for further praise and rewards. Certificates are given for good work/ behaviour etc at the weekly “Mentions” assembly.
 - Pupils’ progress towards learning objectives is assessed during each lesson and recorded. These assessments contribute to planning for subsequent lessons as to whether learning objectives need further work or identifying next steps for learning. Observational assessments are used to record incidental learning. Progress is updated regularly on the Classroom Monitor assessment system.
 - Questioning can be used as a means of assessing pupil learning. Pupils may be helped to respond by the use of visual prompts or auditory cues for those with word finding difficulties.
- **Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment**
 - The organisation of classrooms and routines within lessons contributes to management of pupils’ e.g TEACCH approaches within ASC classes.
 - Positioning of pupils who need physical aids e.g. adapted chairs, so that they feel comfortable and safe contributes to readiness to learn for those pupils with physical difficulties.
 - Some pupils may need to be given something to hold or “twiddle” to help to focus their attention.
 - All pupils are encouraged to use the “GO” hand to leave activities.
 - All staff promote a positive atmosphere within school and positive language is used to encourage pupils.
 - The learning environment should be purposeful, predictable and calm.
 - Defined works areas are in place within the classroom for whole class activities, group work, computer, snack and play activities. Individual workstations are in place where needed.
 - Whole class timetable are used, incorporating photographs or symbols as appropriate. Individual visual timetables are used for those children who need them.
 - Celebrating achievement: Immediate praise during lessons, praise and feedback during plenary; receiving certificates during assemblies, choosing from the “Treasure” box, stickers, reward charts or having special choosing time are all used as motivators to promote good behaviour.

- Pupils are made aware of the school rules and rules within their class. For some of the older children, these rules are drawn up in collaboration with the class and the staff and agreed upon.
- Individual behaviour support plans (IBPs) are in place for pupils who are considered to need additional targeted support to manage their behaviour.
- Management of pupil's behaviour is discussed at class team meetings to ensure a consistent approach to address specific behaviours and the strategies in place to support pupils in the management of their own behaviour.

- **Resources**

Resources should be:

- Age appropriate
- Of good quality and in good condition
- Organised, tidy and well labelled
- Accessible to pupils to encourage independent learning. A proviso to this is in some ASC classes where resources are not so accessible in order to promote communication.
- Available for other classes to use.
- Identified in planning.
- Appropriate in order to contribute to equal opportunities for all pupils.

- **ICT**

ICT is used to support all areas of the curriculum in a variety of forms. All classes have interactive whiteboards. All classes have access to an I PAD. A variety of suitable software is available on the school network and pupils are also able to access appropriate websites. Computers are adapted so that, where necessary, pupils can use switches etc.

- **Cross curricular links**

Objectives in communication, ICT, and literacy can be addressed through relevant links with other curriculum areas. A thematic approach allows for links to be made between subjects within lessons.

- **Equal Opportunities**

All pupils at Pictor have access to a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum, based on the National Curriculum and/or the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. All staff endeavour to help all pupils reach their potential irrespective of race, gender, age or disability.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment is seen as a vital part of the learning process, which establishes progress and contributes to future target setting:

- Baseline assessments are carried out once the child has settled into school. This is usually within 6 weeks of entry into school.

- IEP targets are written and evaluated on a termly basis and are also updated as targets are achieved.
- Pupil progress is recorded on B squared regularly and reported on formally at Annual Review and on the yearly Records of Achievement.
- Annual Reviews report on the progress against the long term statement objectives and the annual objectives.
- Various methods of assessment are used such as observation, questioning. The context or the activity will be varied as an indicator of understanding, as can “sabotaging” an activity so that pupils need to problem solve. Record keeping is supported by observations, photographs, video evidence, and pieces of work.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Planning and IEPs are placed on the school's server termly and feedback is given by the Deputy Head.
- Teachers are observed by the senior leadership team at least annually and will receive verbal and written feedback. Subject managers also monitor their subject which may include classroom observations. Subject monitoring is done on a 3 yearly cycle. Additional observations may be made in individual circumstances under the direction of the Head Teacher. The agreed proforma will be used for all observations.

Health and Safety

It is the duty of all staff to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others that may be affected by their actions. Individual subject policies outline health and safety considerations relevant to that particular subject. All staff undergo annual manual handling training.

Home School Liaison

Parents are made to feel welcome in school and are invited in to several informal events e.g. coffee mornings, workshops, school events. Annual Review meetings are held throughout the year and provide an opportunity for parents/carers to discuss their child's progress during the previous year and objectives set for the coming year. 2 parents a evenings are held, one in the Autumn term and one in the summer term.. In addition, Parents are consulted about their child's IEP targets on a termly basis. Staff communicate with parents via the home school book, telephone conversations, EMail and digital communications, and home visits. At the end of the summer term, parents receive a Record of Achievement which provides a written and photographic account of the progress their child has made over the year. Each teacher sends home an outline of the current topic/theme with suggestions of how parents may be able to support their child's learning. Where appropriate, homework is sent home on a weekly basis.

Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee reviews 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 fit for purpose and best used to support successful teaching and learning.
- Monitor teaching strategies in 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 Appraisal promote high quality teaching.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the self-review processes. These include reports to the Advisory Committee from subject leaders and the Headteacher's report. In-service training sessions are reviewed.