



# **Toft Hill Primary School**

## **Policy for Teaching and Learning**

Adopted by Governing Body November 2017

Signed \_\_\_\_\_(Chair of Governors)

Signed \_\_\_\_\_(Headteacher)

Date of review November 2019

## **TOFT HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL POLICY FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING**

### **Aims**

This policy has been created by and agreed upon by the teaching staff and Governing Body

At Toft Hill Primary School we are committed to high quality teaching and learning to raise standards of achievement for all pupils. This policy summarises the expectations and common working practices within the school. It reflects what has been agreed in terms of approach and consistency and makes explicit the best practice to which the school aspires. It also reflects the aims and objectives of the school and supports its vision.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our subject policies.

### **Principles**

Learning is the key purpose of school and it is a shared commitment. At Toft Hill Primary School we recognise that education involves pupils, parents, staff, governors, the community and the local authority, and that for optimum benefit all should work closely together to support the process of learning. Working in partnership, we aim to:

- provide a supportive, positive, healthy, caring and safe environment, which has high expectations and values all members of the school community;
- recognise the needs and aspirations of all individuals and provide opportunities for all pupils to make the best possible progress and attain the highest personal achievements;
- ensure pupils can develop as literate, numerate and technologically competent individuals, within a broad, balanced, exciting and challenging curriculum;
- provide rich and varied contexts and experiences for pupils to acquire, develop and apply a broad range of knowledge, skills and understanding;
- provide a curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, physical, mental and emotional development of the pupils;
- develop individuals with lively, enquiring minds, good thinking skills, self-respect, self-discipline and positive attitudes;
- encourage all pupils to be enthusiastic and committed learners, promoting their self-esteem, self-worth and emotional well-being;
- develop pupils' confidence and capacity to learn and work independently and collaboratively;
- develop enduring values of respect, honesty, equality, integrity, tolerance, fairness and trust;
- encourage pupils to respond positively to the opportunities, challenges and responsibilities of a rapidly changing world;

- encourage pupils to value the diversity in our society and the environment in which they live;
- encourage pupils to become active and responsible citizens, contributing positively to the community and society.

As a school, we are committed to our mission statement – ***‘caring, believing and aspiring together’***

## **Ethos**

The ethos and spirit of Toft Hill Primary underpin the agreed aims of the school. In the course of their daily work the staff will contribute to the development of this ethos through:

- providing a calm and effective working environment, in which each child can produce his or her best work;
- providing a welcoming environment, in which courtesy, kindness and respect are fostered;
- providing positive role models;
- providing a fair and disciplined environment, in line with the school’s behaviour policy;
- effective management of their professional time;
- developing links with all stakeholders and the wider community;
- valuing and celebrating pupils’ success and achievements;
- reviewing personal and professional development in order to ensure a high level of professional expertise.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Learning and teaching is a shared responsibility and all members of the school community have an important part to play.

All members of the school community should work towards the school’s aims by:

- valuing pupils 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 diversity;

- encouraging, praising and positively reinforcing good relationships, behaviours and work;
- working as a team, supporting and encouraging one another.

**Teachers will endeavour to:**

- provide a challenging and stimulating curriculum designed to encourage all pupils to reach the highest standard of achievement;
- recognise and be aware of the needs of each individual child according to ability and aptitude;
- ensure that learning is progressive and continuous;
- provide clear information on school procedures and pupil progress;
- have a positive attitude to change and the development of their own expertise;
- establish links with the local community to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life;
- work collaboratively with all involved in education to develop a shared philosophy and commonality of practice.
- be good role models, punctual, well prepared and organised;
- be conscientious in keeping their knowledge and understanding of educational issues current;

**Parents are encouraged to support their child's learning by:**

- ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, well-rested and in good health;
- informing the school of reasons for their child's absence;
- ensuring that their child arrives at school wearing the correct uniform and bringing necessary equipment;
- providing support for the discipline within the school and for the teacher's role;
- supporting the work of educational targets and becoming actively involved in the implementation of any support programme;
- participating in discussions concerning their child's progress and attainment;
- ensuring early contact with school to discuss matters which affect a child's happiness, progress and behaviour;

- support the school's homework policy and give due importance to any homework;
- ensuring that all contact addresses and telephone numbers are up to date and correct;
- allowing their child to become increasingly independent as they progress throughout the school

**Pupils are encouraged to support the school's aims by:**

- attending school in good health, maintained by adequate diet, exercise and sleep;
- attending school regularly and punctually;
- being organised, bringing necessary equipment, taking letters home promptly, etc;
- conducting themselves in an orderly manner in line with the expected behaviour policy;
- being responsible for their own learning.

**The community is invited to support the school by:**

- contributing to activities such as assemblies, specialist outings, clubs, etc;
- presenting themselves as positive role models to be emulated;
- organising activities and events throughout the year to extend and deepen pupils' knowledge and skills;
- supporting school events;
- voluntarily helping in the classroom and around school.

**Planning**

The foundation for curricular development is the School Development Plan, developed through a process of collaboration between staff, and approved by governors.

At Toft Hill Primary School we are committed to following the programmes of study as required by the National Curriculum 2014. A curriculum long term plan (based on National Curriculum Programmes of Study) is drawn up by staff and is carefully balanced to ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum, PSHCE and RE. Most subjects are planned and taught as discrete subjects although cross curricular links will be made whenever possible. Regular staff meetings are used to discuss various aspects of the curriculum and ensure consistency of approach and standards.

Planning takes place termly, with reference to the National Curriculum 2014, Early Years Foundation Stage and the Whole School Long Term Curriculum Plan.

- Long term plans can be found on the DLG and within teachers' planning files;

- Medium term plans can be found on the DLG and within teachers' planning files
- Short term planning for maths and English can be found on the DLG and/or in teachers' planning files. (The management of the school feels this is a matter of personal preference and as long as it is available for scrutiny at any time teachers are free to choose).

Plans are based upon previous assessment data/information, pupil need and subject expectation. Curriculum time can be planned as continuous study throughout the term, or as blocks of study. At Toft Hill Primary School we are committed to raising standards of basic skills. By basic skills, we mean the ability to read, write and speak in English and to use Mathematics at a proficient level to facilitate learning across the curriculum.

**Subject Leads** have a variety of roles. These include:

- taking the lead in policy development and the production of schemes of work designed to ensure progression and continuity in their subject throughout the school;
- supporting colleagues in their development and implementation of the scheme of work, and in assessment and record-keeping activities;
- monitoring progress in their subjects and advising the Headteacher and senior leaders on action needed;
- taking responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central resources for their subjects;
- using release time to support colleagues;
- keeping up-to-date through reading and attending relevant courses.

### **Organisation**

The learning environment will be managed in such a way as to facilitate different styles of learning. Opportunities will be made for:

- whole class teaching;
- group work, organised according to appropriate criteria (i.e. ability, mixed ability, friendship, etc);
- one to one teaching;
- collaborative and cooperative learning in pairs or groups;
- independent learning.

All areas of the learning environment will be planned for, including, where appropriate, the outside areas, in order to ensure opportunities for a range of practical activities, which will develop appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding.

The classroom will be organised to facilitate learning and the development of independence. For example:

- resources will be tidy and accessible;
- displays will support the learning process
- pupils will be involved in the maintenance and care of all equipment and resources.

Classroom support is available in the form of teaching assistants, trainees and volunteers. These are used at the discretion of the class teacher. Volunteer helpers assist with the many aspects of school life, including supporting reading and providing assistance with school visits. Trainees e.g. teaching, teaching assistant are welcomed into school.

Excellence is celebrated in display and performance. Each child is given an opportunity to have work displayed in corridor areas of the school. Sustained effort, including drafting and reworking, is encouraged to enhance standards. School events such as performances and assemblies are seen as opportunities for all pupils to demonstrate their own best performance. Pupils are encouraged to believe that any exhibited work (performance or display) should represent their highest standards of personal achievement. 'Star of the Week' awards are given each Friday to celebrate individual achievement e.g. academic, behavioural, sporting etc. 'Headteacher Awards' are also given weekly for personal achievement. The 'Lunchtime Supervisors Award' is given every week to a pupil for positive behaviours in the dining hall or playground. The 'Attendance' award is given to the class with the highest attendance percentage for the week. Attention is drawn to the Government target of 96% and whether classes are achieving this benchmark.

At the end of each year, a KS1 and KS2 progress award is made to pupils who teachers believe have made exemplary progress across their phase. A citizenship award is made to a KS2 pupil. The pupils from year 2 to 6 vote for the person they would most like to receive the award, stating their reasons why.

### **Differentiation**

So that we always have the highest possible expectations of individual learners and so they can demonstrate what they can do, understand and achieve, teachers will differentiate the curriculum according to individual needs by:

- pace;
- content;
- task;
- relevance;
- resources;
- autonomy;
- outcome;
- support;
- challenge.

Differentiated tasks will be detailed in weekly planning. Learning objectives will be specified for all differentiated teaching and reference will be made in weekly plans and support plans where appropriate.

The SENDCO will provide support for staff to ensure that pupils with special educational needs can access a broad and balanced curriculum and make progress.

There are different levels of SEND support (see Special Educational Needs Policy). School will liaise effectively with parents and other professionals to ensure the best possible outcomes, for children with SEND, are achieved.

## **Homework**

Homework is considered to be a valuable element of the learning process. (See Homework Policy)

At Toft Hill School, we believe that homework should mainly be used for the development of basic skills for example reading, spellings, and multiplication tables as well as the development of research skills in the creation of an independent project.

We believe that homework should be:

- to extend the time for learning, thus enabling pupils to practise and consolidate their skills and knowledge and strategies;
- to prepare pupils for secondary school experiences of homework;
- to view learning as a lifelong process and not just restricted to school hours.
- to develop pupils' independent learning skills;
- to help parents keep abreast of what their child can and cannot do;
- to encourage pupils to talk about their work to their parents and explain what they are doing and how;

The school's agreed practice for homework is that:

- homework is set on a regular basis, for all years, in line with our homework policy
- homework will generally follow on from work which has taken place in class but may take many different forms, including reading, learning multiplication facts and spellings. It should not entail new ideas that require explanation from a teacher;
- pupils should understand exactly what they are expected to do, how to do it, and how long it should take;
- homework could sometimes involve the participation of the parents.

## **Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

Regular assessments are made of pupils' work in order to establish the level of attainment and to inform future planning. 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.

Formal summative assessment is carried out at the end of Reception year and each National Curriculum Key Stage (i.e. in Years 2 and 6) through the use of SATs and teacher assessment. (See Assessment Policy). Phonics are tested in Year 1 and re-tested where necessary in Year 2. Other summative tests are used in Years 1, 3, 4 and 5 to support teacher assessment. A baseline assessment is used in Reception/Early Years within six weeks of starting school and Foundation Stage Profiles are maintained.

Suitable tasks for assessment include:

- group discussions;
- short assessment tests in which pupils write answers e.g. mental arithmetic
- longer assessment tasks e.g. reading
- evidence base within books e.g. writing
- discussions in which pupils are encouraged to appraise their own work and progress;
- pupil observations;
- parental observation 'Star moments', IT questionnaire;
- SATs.

Feedback to pupils about their own progress is achieved through discussion and the marking of work. Effective marking:

- helps pupils understand how to improve and comments aim to be positive and constructive;
- can be done while a task is being carried out through discussion between child and teacher;
- is used sensitively and with discretion so that a child can assimilate a limited number of corrections at one time. This will vary according to the age, ability and task.

All results from assessments are analysed and used to inform future planning. (See Assessment Policy).

Continuity is ensured by:

- pre-school transition meetings (nursery visits/liaison with nursery staff);
- cross-phase liaison meetings e.g. between YR and Y1;
- in-school liaison meetings between staff;
- liaison meetings between Year 6 teachers and those from prospective secondary schools;
- visits to secondary schools by pupils in Year 5 for enrichment activities and then by Year 6 pupils for transition ;

- transfer of pupil records of progress and summative assessment results.

Records of progress kept for each child are:

- updated as a minimum termly by teachers (in *itrack*);
- shared by class teachers at the end of each academic year with the new class teacher in preparation for the next year;
- retained throughout the child's time at the school and appropriate records passed on to other schools when pupils leave.

Reporting to parents is done termly through consultations and a simple record of progress in the Autumn and Spring terms and through a written report in the Summer term. Results of individual pupils' assessments are made available to the parents concerned and the overall statistical profile (but not individual results) is made available to parents, governors, LA and national government (on the school website).

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Pupils' work will be monitored and moderated regularly in each of the core curriculum areas by the subject leaders and the Deputy, the Headteacher and if appropriate, the SENDCO. A termly review of monitoring procedures is held with all members of the teaching staff in the form of Pupil Progress Meetings which includes discussions around the Provision Map and the impact of the interventions that are used. Subject leaders will regularly monitor pupils's books. The Headteacher will observe each class teacher in a specified curriculum area on a regular basis. The Performance Management cycle informs learning and teaching. (See Performance Management Policy).

### **Teaching Strategies and Styles**

In order to ensure equality of access and effective matching of tasks to needs, teachers will employ a variety of teaching strategies in any one session. This will include:

- discussion and questioning (open, closed and higher order as appropriate);
- previewing and reviewing work;
- didactic teaching;
- interactive teaching;
- discussion;
- listening;
- brainstorming;
- providing opportunities for reflection by pupils;
- demonstrating high expectations;
- providing opportunities for repetition/reinforcement;
- providing encouragement, positive reinforcement and praise;
- making judgements and responding to individual need;
- intervening, as appropriate, in the learning process in order to encourage development;
- providing all pupils with opportunities for success;
- using a range of communication strategies – verbal and non-verbal.

Activities should show a balance in terms of individual, group and whole class work. Specialist teaching is available from subject leaders when they can be released from class and also in the form of visitors.

The emphasis of our policy is to provide a variety of learning experiences and we encourage pupils to take an active role in their own learning and to understand what it means to be a learner. Teachers therefore use a variety of approaches and techniques:

- pupils are encouraged to apply new learning in a range of situations and contexts
- problem solving, investigative work are used in a range of subjects;
- pupils are encouraged to communicate findings in a variety of ways;
- opportunities are provided for pupils to become involved in decision making and to take responsibility;

At Toft Hill Primary School we recognise the importance of key skills. Opportunities will be made available across the curriculum to develop:

- application of number;
- communication;
- computing skills
- problem solving;
- working with others;
- improving own learning and performance
- independence.

Thinking skills will also be developed across the curriculum. This will include:

- creative thinking;
- enquiry;
- information processing;
- reasoning;
- evaluation.

We are a P4C (Philosophy for Children) School and through P4C thinking skills are actively developed.

At Toft Hill Primary School we recognise the importance of formative assessment and the important role it has to play in creating a learning culture. We believe that formative assessment furthers and deepens learning and consists of four basic elements, underpinned by confidence that every child can improve and an awareness of the importance of pupils' high self-esteem. The four elements are: sharing learning intentions; effective questioning; self and peer evaluation; effective feedback. Formative assessment carries with it the expectation that, when properly motivated and appropriately taught, all learners can reach a level of achievement which may currently appear beyond them. It provides a breadth of proven life-long learning skills based on an understanding of how we learn rather than what we ought to be learning. This includes:

- creating a positive learning environment;
- focusing all feedback on specific performance improvements which can be acted on;
- sharing an overview of content, process and benefits of the learning to come;
- engaging learners by posing problems and challenging thinking;
- providing opportunities for learners to meet the challenge in a variety of pairings and with multiple ways of representing their understanding;

- creating opportunities for reflection and meaningful dialogue;
- reviewing what has been learned, how it was learned and how it will be used.

### **Learning Processes and Learning Styles**

Pupils enter school at different stages of development. Pupils learn in different ways and at different rates of progress. In the course of learning, pupils develop their skills through a variety of processes and learning styles. These include:

- investigation;
- experimentation;
- listening;
- observation;
- talking and discussion;
- asking questions;
- child-initiated play;
- adult directed/adult focused;
- practical exploration and role play;
- retrieving information;
- imagining;
- repetition;
- problem-solving;
- making choices and decision-making.

At Toft Hill Primary School opportunities are organised to allow pupils access to these processes, and for them to develop their own strategies to gain knowledge and skills. We aim to provide opportunities to develop a wide range of learning styles. We recognise that each child has a unique way of learning and that learning preference is affected by previous experience, competence, confidence, beliefs and values. We shall ensure that learning is accessed by as many means as possible. Staff are aware of a range of theories and research linked to learning including encouraging a 'Growth Mindset' (C. Dweck); ensuring pupils work at their optimum level - Zone of Proximal Development (L. Vygotsky); developing pupils' resilience and ability to cope with challenge (C. Dweck, G. Claxton) and develop their Gem Powers (T. Robson) to help them understand the physical manifestation of challenge, how their actions impact upon others and how to solve their own problems.

Planning will incorporate as many styles of working as possible. These styles include:

- individual learning;
- collaborative learning in small groups, or pairs;
- one to one learning with an adult, or more able pupil;
- whole class;
- independent learning;
- environment enhancements for child initiated play.

Group work may include friendship, matched ability, mixed ability, etc, appropriate to the activity. Collaborative learning is encouraged, although some periods of the day may be set aside for silent work.

Teachers at Toft Hill feel that pupils learn best when:

- they are happy, healthy and alert – receptive and positive

- they are interested and involved – learning is relevant and stimulating
- the purpose of a task is understood – they understand why they are doing it
- they feel secure – in terms of environment, relationships and learning
- they feel valued – teachers and other adults care about their development as learners
- they have opportunities to explore and take risks
- they are actively involved, making choices and taking responsibility in their learning
- they have an element of control and can work with independence
- they receive positive feedback and praise for achievements
- the learning environment is well-organised and resources are easily accessed
- tasks are differentiated, matched to the child
- learning is built on existing knowledge and experience – clearly defined small steps
- they have opportunities to talk about their work, reflecting, discussing and sharing ideas
- the teacher is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and motivated
- they have clearly defined targets which they can successfully achieve eg appropriate time scale

Effective learning is ensured through the process of monitoring successful teaching (see monitoring policy) and pupil's learning outcome i.e. Baseline Assessment, reading ages and SAT results.

Successful teaching takes account of pupils's prior learning and must ensure continuity and progression.

Linked to the above, successful teaching is:

- confident – teachers have a clear understanding of subject knowledge and setting objectives
- high expectation – there is optimism about, and high expectation of success
- well planned – there is differentiation with methods and organisation strategies which match curricular objectives and needs of all pupils
- interactive – pupil's contributions are encouraged, expected, extended

- characterised by high quality dialogue
- well-paced – there is a sense of urgency, driven by the need to make progress and succeed
- informed – by assessment outcomes

## **Resources**

Classroom and central resources are the responsibility of classroom teachers and subject leaders who ensure that:

- there is a range of appropriate, accessible and labelled resources available for which pupils can select materials suitable to the task in hand;
- all pupils know where classroom resources are kept and the rules about their access and use;
- pupils are encouraged to act independently in choosing, collecting and returning resources where appropriate;
- reading books are a valued resource and pupils are encouraged to treat/ appropriately;
- pupils work together to establish an attractive, welcoming and well organised environment engendering respect, care and value for all resources.

Each classroom will be equipped with a basic set of resources and books appropriate to the age range. Specialist resources will be stored in the appropriate curriculum resource cupboard/area, and will be regularly audited by the subject leaders. Consumables will be replenished as necessary. Staff may contact subject leaders with suggestions for specialist materials which may need ordering.

Pupils will be taught how to use all resources correctly and safely, with care and respect and with regard for Health and Safety and waste. Care will be taken to ensure that resources reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of our society, and that all pupils have equality of access.

At Toft Hill Primary School the use of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum is valued and these are used throughout the school to widen pupils's experiences and support learning across a range of subject areas.

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

- as pupils progress throughout the school they are encouraged to take greater control of their own learning, including their use of time;
- opportunities for learning are maximised by ensuring that tasks are made specific by focused objectives;

- teachers will encourage pupils to work within given time scales, and will facilitate the effective use of time through the provision of appropriate resources and planning extension activities;
- all pupils engage in useful activities upon entering the classroom and know what to do between the end of an activity and the end of a session.

Computing is a major resource, which is used across the whole curriculum.

Health and Safety issues are the responsibility of all who work in the school. Two members of staff are nominated as Health and Safety representatives and all problems should be reported to them. These are the Headteacher and the Caretaker.

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