



The Chandler C of E (Aided) Junior School

Policy Number TL-01

TEACHING FOR LEARNING

Introduction

- THIS DOCUMENT reflects the philosophy behind the active promotion of learning and the teaching of learning skills at The Chandler Junior School. It details an agreed range of practices in respect to Teaching and Learning and the philosophy, planning and monitoring of the curriculum.
- IT WAS DEVELOPED during INSET activities with teaching, non-teaching staff and governors and has been the foundation document for review of all school policies.
- IT WILL BE REVIEWED bi-annually in the Autumn term. Next review Autumn 2011.

Our Aims

At The Chandler we aim to promote "lifelong learning" and to cultivate in our pupils a sense of citizenship which will enable them to achieve their full potential and to cope with the challenges met in later life. We aim to cultivate happy, well-rounded, caring and confident individuals who will be able to forge courteous and positive relationships and apply their learning in different contexts and situations. The development of the "whole child" is central to our philosophy.

We believe that we need to get it right - our pupils have one chance at junior-age education and their time at The Chandler is short, precious and cannot be repeated. We strive to provide a quality education, to reflect critically on our practices and to adapt and develop our strategies to ensure we offer the most appropriate learning opportunities at all times.

We actively challenge new initiatives and analyse the benefits for our pupils before adapting our processes - we aim to be a "learning school" at all levels. The staff at The Chandler are the most expensive and valuable resource - it is their impact which has the greatest effect on learning - we therefore aim to ensure their training and development is central to school improvement (*See School Development Plan and Continuing Professional Development Policy*)

Creating a Quality Learning Environment

We aim to cultivate responsibility and promote pride in our school environment. We believe that unless pupils' basic needs are met they cannot reach their full potential. We aim for our school to:

- Be safe, clean, well organised and well resourced.
- Be kept clean and tidy.
- Be stocked with suitable furniture.
- Contain stimulating displays which enhance and promote learning. (*See Display Policy*)
- Comply with Health and Safety regulations to ensure pupil safety. (*See Health, Safety & Welfare Policy*)

To promote thinking and learning, children are encouraged to bring water bottles to school and a mid-morning snack of fruit or cheese. We also encourage the playing of relaxing or stimulating music to promote thinking skills. Activation breaks and the use of "brain gym" further enhance learning opportunities.

Attitudes to Learning

- We aim to create learning opportunities which provide high challenge but low stress and develop self-esteem.
- Teachers are quick to praise and offer a range of rewards (see *Behaviour and Discipline Policy and PSHCE policy*).
- We use humour as a strategy for developing relationships and encourage children's sense of humour by acting as a good role model by actively discouraging use of jokes at the expense of others or in poor taste.
- We recognise that words of encouragement have a more powerful impact on learning than negativity and where criticism is necessary, it is given constructively and directed at the behaviour or performance rather than a child's self (See *Marking Policy*).
- We aim to cultivate an environment in which a perceived failure is turned into a positive learning experience.
- We proactively plan opportunities through PSHCE/Circle times for children to explore and reflect upon their attitudes and values.
- Opportunities are designed to ensure children develop a sense of belonging e.g. Collective worship, House Team activities, Class assemblies, development of whole school charters etc. They are actively involved in both the decision making processes e.g. through school council, and in resolving issues e.g. peer mediation and buddy systems.

Playing to Strengths

- We believe that all children can succeed. We also recognise that children have preferred learning styles (Visual, Auditory or Kinaesthetic). Work is planned to meet the full range of learning styles.
- We recognise that boys and girls favour different learning styles and learn at different rates during their primary years. We regularly analyse school data to ensure that strategies are put in place to ensure equal opportunities for all children regardless of gender (See *Equal Opportunities Policy*). We take steps to use good learning styles exhibited by either gender, as a model for other learners, e.g. active grouping of girl/boys, and to redress imbalances in performance.

Putting Learning in Context

Learning is most effective when children are able to make links between what they already know and new concepts. We believe that children learn best when learning is put in context. The following strategies are used to ensure that new learning is fully accessed:

- Use of concrete, child friendly stimuli.
- Use of prior experiences either from class or individuals.
- Sharing of the learning intention at the beginning of the lesson with reference to why this learning will be useful e.g. later use of knowledge or application of skills/giving children the "big picture".
- A balance of individual, group and collaborative learning experiences.

- Explicit links made to prior learning.
- Summary of learning during the plenary session of lessons.

This process enables children to be proactive in the setting of their own formal and informal targets for development through a clear understanding of "where they are" and "where they want to get to".

In order to reinforce this, teachers often use mind-mapping techniques at the beginning and end of topics as both an assessment tool and to enable children to visualise the links between their learning.

A Summary: Providing Effective Teaching for Learning

In order to maximise learning opportunities teachers should:

- ensure learning resources are prepared in advance, are suitable for the needs of the children and are accessible.
- ensure they have good knowledge of the subjects within the National Curriculum and how to teach and assess the Programmes of Study
- be clear about their learning intention and translate this clearly to the children
- use assessment information from the lesson to influence future planning
- organise the lesson to ensure all learning styles are accommodated, designing activities which motivate and lead to increased self-esteem through appropriate levels of challenge matched to ability
- establish good relationships with pupils and colleagues based on mutual respect and humour
- plan effectively to utilise the skills of any teaching assistant or additional adult available
- act as a role model for behaviour, attitude and love of learning
- develop behaviour management techniques which promote focused activity
- have the opportunity to engage in professional development (as provider and recipient) in order to enhance and develop their own skills and those of their colleagues

Our planned learning opportunities therefore, should enable children at The Chandler to:

- Learn from first hand experience and engage in practical, investigative work
- Be able to communicate their findings in a variety of ways
- Work both individually and independently and also be able to co-operative as part of a team
- Plan and investigate their own questions, taking increasing responsibility for planning and organising their learning
- Fully understand what they are learning, why they are learning it and how they can apply the skills and knowledge covered in other contexts
- Be able to select appropriate tools and materials to support their learning and to be confident about making choices and decisions
- Establish good relationships with members of staff and their peers based on mutual respect
- Produce work of a high standard for a variety of audiences
- Develop listening, questioning, discussion and reflection skills and basic study skills.
- Evaluate their own work and set targets for improvement
- Develop self-restraint, tolerance, good behaviour patterns and social skills.

Curriculum Design

The philosophy behind curriculum design at The Chandler recognises the following:

- A statutory obligation to fulfil National Curriculum requirements including recommended time per subject
- The need to offer a broad and balanced curriculum whilst striving to raise attainment in basic skills.
- Opportunity for cross curriculum activity and creativity in order to encourage application and transference of skills. The coherence of the curriculum can be made stronger by combining aspects of subjects.
- Children need to enjoy what they are doing to learn effectively.
- Our pupils will live as adults in a technologically advancing world.
- Our pupils will experience an international perspective, as links to Europe become stronger.

Therefore, subject leaders work collaboratively towards a cross curricular approach to maximise learning opportunities across subjects. This may mean subjects such as DT, PE, Music or Art are blocked to dovetail with a particular History/Science or Geography topic. e.g. Calypso songs/Calypso Dancing/Batik work/Jamaican Life.

Although English and Maths are taught as discrete areas, links can also be made with other subjects e.g. use of historical source material as a shared text during an English lesson. This cross curricular approach makes effective use of time in what is becoming a crowded primary curriculum.

In order to prepare our children for an international perspective, French is taught across the school either by a specialist French teacher or by the class teacher if he/she feels they have the necessary skills.

Planning the Curriculum

The curriculum operates in a one year cycle and is reviewed and revised as part of a bi-annual cycle or in response to pupil needs. Curriculum leaders are expected to stay abreast of developments in their subject in order to lead their subject and adjust documentation in line with KS2 requirements.

The Planning Process

1. **LONG TERM PLANNING:** schemes of work, developed from NC documentation, QCA schemes of work, unit plans etc.
2. **MEDIUM TERM PLANS:** Year teams map each term's learning objectives for each subject into a spreadsheet.
3. **SHORT TERM PLANNING:** Year teams meet weekly to evaluate the previous week's planning in light of formative and summative assessment data and to plan for the forthcoming week. Short term planning is shared weekly with Teaching Assistants.

Monitoring the Curriculum

The curriculum and curriculum planning is monitored and evaluated in the following ways:

- Termly observations with an agreed teaching & learning focus by senior staff/Head
- Planning submitted weekly to Head teacher

- Termly planning evaluation by Head/subject leaders linked to SDP priorities.
- Governors' termly visits
- MaST (Monitoring & Support Time) for each subject leader involves arrange of activities as appropriate e.g. review of policy/scheme/planning/work sampling/lesson observation, with Headteacher /Senior Leaders
- Opportunity in subject leaders annual evaluation/SDP bid to work alongside County consultant for subject
- Opportunities for observation of other colleagues/identified good practice
- Half termly moderation activities in Year Teams for English and Maths
- Annual whole school moderation activities for Core subjects.
- Whole school SAT analysis to identify areas of whole school weakness.

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