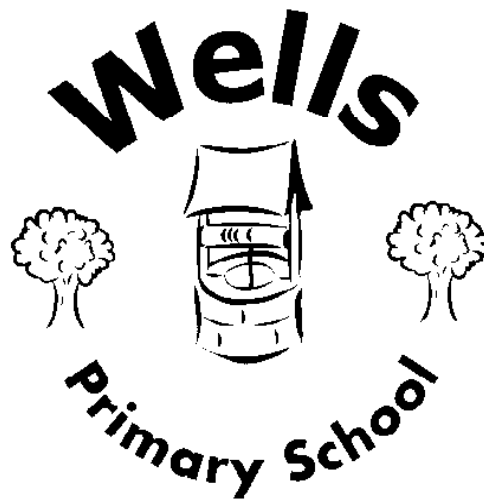


# Wells Primary School

## Teaching and Learning Policy



Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair of Teaching and Learning Committee

Reviewed: May 2024

## **Teaching and Learning Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 At Wells Primary School we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the idea that both 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 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.

### **2. Aims and objectives**

- 2.1 We believe that people learn best in different ways. At our school we provide a rich and varied learning environment 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;
  - learn from each other, through the adoption of a collaborative, enquiry based approach to teaching and learning, where good practice is shared;
  - foster children's self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with other people;
  - provide children with the skills they require to become effective life-long learners;
  - develop children's self-respect and encourage children to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others;
  - develop children's spiritual, moral and cultural awareness
  - develop pupils' understanding and 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 to understand the wider local, national and global communities, and their role within these communities
  - help children grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens;
  - provide an inclusive education to all children.

### **Policy in Action**

### **3. Effective Learning**

- 3.1 We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to develop strategies that allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them.

3.2 We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, to reflect on how they learn and what they have learnt, what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn.

- High expectations of all pupils should be made clear through success criteria
- Within the lesson, pupils should be given opportunities to reflect on their learning and assess their progress. Review should not be confined to the end of the lessons; review should be woven throughout the entire lesson.
- Open-ended questions should be posed to probe and extend pupils' learning.
- Through regular formative assessment, which identifies areas for development, pupils should be given opportunities to respond to the teacher's marking in order to improve their responses (at least once a week in literacy and maths).
- Termly assessment reviews should enable teachers and pupils to monitor pupil progress.
- Where possible, pupils should be given oral feedback and engage in discussion with teachers about their learning.

### **Policy in Action**

## **4. Effective Teaching**

4.1 When teaching we focus on motivating the children and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. We use the school curriculum plan to guide our teaching. This sets out the aims, objectives and values of the school and details what is to be taught to each year phase.

### **Planning the delivery of the curriculum**

4.2 We base our teaching on our knowledge of the children's prior level of attainment. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge and skills of the children. 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 we give due regard to information and targets contained in the children's Individual Education Plan (IEPs). We have high expectations of all children, and we believe that their work here at Wells Primary School should be of the highest possible standard.

### **Policy in Action**

We expect all teachers' preparation and planning to incorporate the following:

- clear and concise learning intentions;
- consideration of different learning styles;
- careful thought about the tasks set;
- differentiation and appropriate groupings;
- high quality resources;
- points for future planning.

## **Ensuring that a positive ethos is maintained and promoted**

### **Policy in Action**

- we expect all our staff to establish good working relationships with all pupils;
- we expect pupils to be treated fairly with respect and kindness;
- we expect pupils to be given equal opportunity to take part in class activities;
- we expect staff to be enthusiastic about learning
- we expect all lessons to have clear learning intentions and success criteria;
- we expect all lessons to be clearly differentiated to enable all pupils to access learning
- we expect all pupils to receive regular and clear feedback which enhances learning;
- we expect learning to be enhanced through the use of ICT, where appropriate;
- we expect pupils to reflect on their learning and on the teacher's feedback.
- we expect all our teachers to follow the school policy with regard to classroom management;
- we expect pupils to contribute to a positive learning environment
- we expect pupils to try their best;
- we expect pupils to be praised for their efforts and by doing so we help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general.

### **5. Ensuring effective use of support staff**

Learning assistants provide an invaluable contribution to the children's education. Sometimes they work with individual pupils and sometimes they work with small groups. Support staff also assist with carrying out administrative tasks, some marking, the preparation and storage of classroom equipment and the creation of displays according to their timetable.

### **6. Ensuring that we have a learning environment that promotes and enhances effective learning.**

We expect our classrooms to be attractive learning environments. We change displays on a regular basis to ensure that the classroom reflects the topics studied by the children. We ensure that all children have the opportunity to display their work at some time during the year. All classrooms have a range of dictionaries and fiction and non-fiction books, as well as displays relating to English and Maths. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning and an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by the children.

#### **Policy in action**

#### **Creating the climate for effective learning**

#### **What we expect to see in our classrooms**

- All pupils actively engaged in learning.
- Teaching that facilitates learning.
- Learning intentions and success criteria displayed for each lesson
- Teaching points displayed for pupils to refer to in order to help their learning
- Resources prepared prior to lessons.
- Information boards which display weekly planning and groupings
- Access to water for pupils throughout the school day
- Displays that celebrate pupils' work
- Interactive displays that relate to topic work
- A stimulating book corner for reading and reflection
- A tidy environment
- An environment that encourages independence.

#### **What we expect to see in communal areas**

- Displays that reflect progression in the curriculum in designated areas.
- Work areas that are appropriately used and kept tidy.

### **7. Ourselves as learners**

We expect all staff to reflect on their strengths and areas for development and plan their professional development needs accordingly. We are committed to supporting all staff in developing their skills and knowledge, so that they can continually improve their practice. We expect staff to share new knowledge and feedback relevant information to key stage and subject co-ordinators.

### **8. The role of governors**

Our governors determine, 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 self-review processes. These include: the school's SEF and School Development Plan; reports from subject leaders and the termly headteacher's report to governors, as well as a review of the in-service training sessions attended by our staff.

## 9. The role of parents and carers

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

- holding regular parents'/carers' workshops to explain our school strategies for teaching reading, maths and health education;
- sending information to parents/carers at the start of each term in which we outline the topics that the children will be studying during that term at school;
- sending reports to parents/carers in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can improve further;
- explaining to parents/carers how they can support their children with homework. Maths homework should contain examples of strategies used. The calculation strategy is available on the school web-site.  
We suggest, for example, regular shared reading with very young children, and support for older children with their projects and investigative work.

We believe that parents/carers have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We would like parents/carers 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;

### Equal Opportunities

- Our planning ensures that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum regardless of race, gender, religion, language or ability
- We value and support the cultural and linguistic background of all pupils.
- We recognise and respect diversity. We encourage positive images of all, irrespective of culture, ethnicity, religious affiliation, national origin, national status, gender or ability.
- Our policies, procedures and activities are differentiated, as appropriate, to take account of differences in life experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which pupils face.

## Appendix 1

### Lesson structure

Many lessons within our school will follow a structure made up of four key elements, however, teachers have the flexibility to adapt their teaching according to the needs of their pupils.

Phase 1: set the scene, place learning in wider context; link to previous learning; share learning intention.

Phase 2: pupils receive new information; instruction/exposition (**teaching**)

Phase 3: pupils make sense of information; processing; understanding (**learning**)

Phase 4: review information (**plenary**)

Interpretation of the four-phase structure may be different in different situations – the age and ability of pupils, the subject area and focus for lessons will help to determine this.

Importantly, teachers may scroll through the phases more than once during a lesson, to maximise learning opportunities. A short period of teaching (Phase 2) may be followed by pupils engaged in an activity to practise their new learning (Phase 3), followed by another brief period of teaching (Phase 2) to extend learning followed by another appropriate exercise (Phase 3).

Similarly, review should be woven throughout the entire lesson to help assess learning.

### Phase 1- preparing for learning

#### Create an appropriate working atmosphere by:

- Ensuring that lessons are fully prepared
- Ensuring resources are prepared and on tables in advance (books should be distributed beforehand, basic equipment should be available on tables)
- Greeting pupils with enthusiasm
- Making expectations of behaviour explicit

#### Link lesson to prior learning and put in context

Ask pupils to think about what they learned in the last lesson; use talk partners to confirm. It could be that this is an opportunity to give pupils time to respond to marking and feedback. Make the connection with the content of the current lesson and put the learning in context.

#### Share learning intentions

Pupils should know what they are going to learn and why, what is expected of them by the end of the lesson. E.g.: “By the end of today’s lesson, you will all know/ be able to/ understand...so that..”

Learning intentions should be:

- Specific

- Clear to pupils (child-friendly)
- Written down
- Referred to throughout the lesson

### **Trigger the brain**

The brain will tend to notice things if it has been primed to look for them.

Prompts such as: “Today, when I am reading, I want you to listen out for powerful adjectives that you can use in your writing later on,” will increase pupils’ chances of them doing so.

### **Stimulate curiosity**

Capturing the imagination and stimulating curiosity in the first few minutes of a lesson will go a long way to ensuring a high quality learning experience.

### **Phase 2 –receiving new information**

The emphasis during this stage is on providing pupils with new information.

During this teaching phase, new information can be provided in different ways, e.g. diagrams; video clips; Powerpoint presentations; demonstrations; modelling (particularly in writing); exploration.

The quality of this input is essential and plays a significant part in children’s understanding.

To ensure that the quality of input is high, teachers at Wells are expected to:

### **Keep periods of teaching short**

Pupils have limited attention spans. Concentration span will be broadly the child’s chronological age plus two minutes. Significantly more learning will take place where new information is transferred and explained in three ten-minute periods of exposition than in one thirty minute session.

### **Create more than one ‘beginning’**

By chunking exposition into short sessions, new beginnings are created; pupils tend to remember more from the beginning of an experience. Make new starts obvious by using expressions such as: “Now we are moving onto the second part of our learning...; the next activity we are doing will help you to...;I want you to move back to the carpet/get out your whiteboards for the next part of our lesson.”

### **Punctuate input with questions**

Before input, ask open questions. This will prime the brain to notice detail and begin to form an answer, even at a subconscious level, during the input.

During the input, differentiated closed questions will keep pupils alert and provide instant feedback as to whether they have understood. Too many open questions during an explanation can easily take a lesson off at an inappropriate tangent and be distracting to pupils’ thought processes. An open question at the end of an input takes the learning into phase three and is designed to develop and assess a deeper understanding.

### **Present information in multi-sensory ways**



The fact that people prefer to receive information in different ways demands that information is transmitted in more than one way in Phase 2. A verbal explanation may be clear, concise and of high quality but the vast majority of the class may be working outside their preferred learning style, requiring visual or kinaesthetic input to maximise their learning.

### **Phase 3 – processing and learning**

By keeping the ‘teaching’ sessions short, pupils have the opportunity to experiment, practise, consolidate and extend their new learning.

#### **Assess prior knowledge**

All pupils should make progress during the lesson. Even if pupils are revisiting a topic, e.g. the ‘chunking’ method in division, pupils should be expected to make progress. This could be that they work independently for the first time using this strategy, or that they work with larger numbers, or that they apply the strategy to solve a range of word problems. Differentiation is key to good learning. Challenge is essential for all learners.

#### **Assess during the session**

Astute observation of children’s progress enables the teacher and teaching assistant (where appropriate) to review during the lesson. Misconceptions can be quickly picked up and discussed. Similarly, asking children to assess their own work against the success criteria can be used as a valuable learning tool. Pupils should be frequently reminded of the success criteria. Examples where pupils have met the success criteria can be shared. Shared marking in maths provides the opportunity to explain misconceptions immediately.

#### **Plan for challenge**

Extension activities should be planned for every lesson. Pupils often surprise teachers by how quickly they grasp new concepts or by how much they already know; it is essential to have a ‘next steps’ activity prepared in case prior learning has been mis-judged. It is always easier to stop and revisit a learning point than to extend pupils ‘on the hoof’.

#### **Match activities to the learning intention**

It is essential to provide pupils with the necessary resources to meet the learning intention. If the learning intention is: ‘to classify living and non-living things’, pupils should not spend most of the session preparing a table and only a few minutes sorting. Similarly, if the learning intention is: ‘to write a news report’, pupils should not spend the best part of the lesson writing a headline.

#### **Be creative**

Well-structured lessons do not preclude creativity, spontaneity, imagination or individuality. Children are more likely to remember learning that they have enjoyed. Try to incorporate a rich variety of learning experiences.

#### **Use additional adults effectively.**

Whilst there may be occasional times when teaching assistants are asked to complete non-teaching tasks (e.g. display work), the vast majority of their work should be in supporting children's learning. They are an invaluable resource and must be utilised for maximum impact on pupils' learning.

Teaching assistants must have:

- a clear timetable outlining their work with pupils (displayed in classrooms and a copy to Sendco)
- access to plans in advance of lesson; ideally teachers will discuss activities prior to lessons .
- prompts for work with pupils e.g. prepared questions; assessment prompts.

Teaching assistants should never just watch what is going on during teacher input. They should be sitting next to pupils they are working with, quietly engaging the pupils or using other resources to help facilitate their learning (e.g. a numberline or prompts on a whiteboard).

Teaching assistants should be involved in assessing pupils' understanding and recording their observations to feed into teachers' assessments.

#### **Phase 4 – reviewing the learning**

The emphasis in this stage is on reviewing what has been learnt and reflecting on how it has been learnt.

Review is key to memory and should not be confined to the end of the lesson. Referring back to the learning intention, reviewing key steps to success and reinforcing prior learning are highly significant in the learning process as they help to commit learning to memory.

#### **Involve pupils in the review process**

When pupils identify for themselves what has been learnt, their learning is more likely to be etched in their memories. Use prompts such as:

- “What are the three most important things you learned in today's lesson?”
- “Which of the steps in the success criteria helped you the most?”
- “What three questions could you answer now that you couldn't answer at the beginning of the lesson?”
- “If you were asked to repeat the task, what would you do differently?”
- “Without looking at the success criteria, explain to your partner the key steps to success for today's lesson?”

Pupils should finish the lesson knowing what they know/have learnt. Older pupils should make a self-assessment where possible.

Aim to finish the lesson with a question related to the learning in the next lesson.

Revisit learning on a regular basis – at the end of the day, the following day, the next week or at the end of a half term. Quizzes are hugely valuable for revisiting and consolidating learning.

Preparation is crucial to good teaching and learning.