

Teaching and Learning policy

Our philosophy and approach

TUDOR PRIMARY SCHOOL
VERSION 4

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Introduction

To ensure the highest possible levels of progress and attainment for all the children who attend Tudor Primary School, it is essential that there is a shared understanding of what constitutes highly effective learning and the highly effective teaching that enables this to occur.

Our core purpose

Everything we do must ensure that children achieve really well and progress. Therefore, the teaching that takes place every day must always be focused upon this core purpose – learning.

To help children on their learning journey, we must ensure high levels of consistency in approach and organisation so that no artificial blocks are put in place to stop children from progressing.

Teachers must also ensure that active learning takes place from the very start of every lesson for every child – the teacher is the facilitator of learning. Clear and precise Learning Objectives and success criteria, in language that is appropriate to the age and stage of the children being taught, are essential to learning and these are communicated effectively.

Assessing the quality of your teaching

The following are a range of key questions that those in the Tudor Primary teaching team need to ask themselves to ensure that they are highly reflective professionals.

These questions are:

- What is effective teaching and learning?
- What are the key elements of effective teaching?
- What is it that effective teachers do that ensures effective learning?
- How do we achieve good or better teaching and learning consistently?
- What will it look like (when achieved)?

The following are some common indicators that are observed in any classroom where teaching & learning is never less than good:

What is effective teaching and learning?

What is quality teaching?

- Teaching is facilitating opportunities in which children can thrive
- Not only is it sharing knowledge, it is enhancing curiosity
- Providing opportunities and experiences that enable children to seek new ideas
- Facilitating success in children of all backgrounds and abilities

What is quality learning?

- Being able to apply new skills and knowledge with confidence
- Being open to gathering new information and building new knowledge and skills
- Recognising the value in learning from mistakes
- Being enabled to question knowledge

What are the key elements of effective teaching?

- There are high expectations of children's behaviour and this is clearly evident
- Teaching is interactive – it facilitates high quality learning
- Teachers demonstrate appropriate subject knowledge
- There are high levels of engagement by both the children and adults
- Teachers know all their children well, as a result, they provide them with appropriately differentiated tasks and activities that stimulate
- Effective learning that enables them to progress
- The ability to adapt their style of teaching and the content of their lessons to meet the varying learning needs within the class – they can think on their feet
- All tasks given to all children are challenging yet achievable

- A clear, precise, learning objective to every lesson, with the learning achievable within that single session, understood by the children with shared success criteria/ indicators to enable children to assess their learning journey
- Teachers never losing sight that everything is about learning
- Teachers who facilitate learning effectively so that children can demonstrate high levels of independence and motivation

What is it that effective teachers actually 'do' that ensures effective learning?

- They inspire the children
- They enable the children to be independent in their learning
- They create an atmosphere of trust and support
- They motivate and show enthusiasm for learning
- They lead by example- they recognise that they are 'learners' themselves
- They communicate effectively
- They set high standards for the children as well as themselves
- They set achievable challenges that excite the children
- They adapt their lessons in the light of new understanding
- They empathise with the needs of the children in their care
- They treat all the children in their care fairly and with a sense of equality

How do we achieve good or better teaching consistently?

- We are able to give and receive feedback
- We develop effective self-evaluation – we become reflective practitioners
- We share good practice across the school and are open to collaborative professional development
- We are prepared at all times – nothing is left to chance, we are well planned & have an attention to detail
- We use highly effective assessment and tracking systems to constantly inform us about what is to be taught and how to teach it
- We take the time to observe our colleagues and are comfortable with being observed by them
- We plan effectively by using the outcomes from on-going formative assessment and feedback
- We are flexible in our approach and are open to different strategies, techniques and ideas, including the outcomes from research
- We have a high focus upon the progression of each child and ensure that they are equipped with the skills to progress well
- We always ensure that children's learning is active and not passive

Active teaching / active learning

As a staff, we have ensured that we have a collective understanding to what constitutes highly effective teaching & learning. Accompanied with research, it is important that we, as a staff recognise what **active** teaching and learning means. As a result 'active teaching / active learning' is a term used to describe precisely what should be observable.

If children are compliant or passive within classrooms, this hinders not only their own, but also their peers learning as there will be a lack of engagement and energy.

Therefore, each lesson needs to be structured in a way that increases the amount of time children are actively learning. A very precise identification of the specific learning that will take place for each child in the lesson is a crucial part of this process.

To enable work to be pitched at the right level, so that each child is faced with an achievable challenge in all their work, accurate on-going assessment is vital. Before any lessons can be planned, the class teacher must have a firm grasp of the child's individual skills, knowledge and understanding. From this, sharply focused planning (both weekly and daily) can occur that will lead to lessons being delivered that are appropriately pitched and with high levels of challenge.

The effectiveness of teachers planning will form part of each term's review of teaching and learning. This will be apparent by the pitch of lessons, the level of differentiation, the quality of marking and feedback and how children are enabled to respond and act upon this feedback, how actively children are engaged in their learning and the quality of pupil outcomes.

Professional collaboration

High quality teaching and learning will be further developed across the whole school when professional collaboration becomes embedded into our culture. This will require teachers and support staff working alongside colleagues in different classes and year groups so that skills, approaches and expertise can be shared and developed.

This approach will also help to further develop consistency across the whole school.

It is important that the drive for greater collaboration comes from individual teacher's professional enthusiasm and therefore requires all teaching staff to be proactive.

What does high quality teaching and learning look like?

During discussions as a teaching workforce we acknowledged that evidence for effective teaching and learning would be what you observe as daily practice within classrooms. The following are some key aspects that the team at Tudor shared as what to expect in a highly effective learning environment

- Children are engaged, and on task. They are listening/ talking with each other
- Children interact effectively and ask questions to deepen their understanding
- 'Light bulb moments' are evident as children acquire new learning and skills
- Children are engaged and happy in the learning. They smile and are excited to be learning together.
- There is a clear sense of pride in the outcomes and these are celebrated. The children want to challenge themselves further
- Both children (and adults) use resources effectively. They are confident in accessing and using a range of resources that are appropriate for the activity
- There are many opportunities for feedback and this is swiftly and efficiently given and responded to
- Adults are working with and alongside children- collaboration/ support. The adults are recognise that they are learning and developing alongside the children
- There is inclusion for all and children are able to respond independently to personal challenge
- Adults effectively use their knowledge of the children and they are able to confidently make adjustments when required
- There are high standards of behaviour and all stakeholders are enabled to work in a purposeful atmosphere. At all times, this is modelled by the adults
- Learning enables independence, not dependence
- Children are not worried about making mistakes- they recognise the value in learning from them!

This is not an exhaustive list but provides some key examples of observable features of effective practice.

The contents of this policy are the collective (and regularly updated) view of all staff engaged in teaching and learning and therefore, during monitoring and evaluation activities, will be an intrinsic element of the criteria against which the quality of teaching and learning will be judged. They should also be the criteria that each individual member of staff, engaged in teaching and learning activities, should use to self-evaluate.

If this level of practice is evident in every class, every minute of every day, the full potential of all the children in our care (as well as the staff) will be fulfilled.