
SAINT NICHOLAS SCHOOL

TEACHING & LEARNING POLICY

Note: This policy applies to all sections of the school including EYFS

Reviewed Oct 2019

Review Date Oct 2021

1. VISION STATEMENT

- To provide a learning experience whereby all pupils are stimulated and encouraged to develop to their full potential
- To establish a culture where learning is valued and teaching styles are tailored to meet the needs of the individual
- To develop our pupils to become effective independent learners, so that they leave school equipped with skills that give them the capacity for life long learning

2. AIMS

- To provide a safe, stimulating learning environment for all pupils
- To set high expectations for all pupils in order to raise their aspirations
- To create a community in which all members strive for continuous improvement
- To positively value all individuals regardless of age, race, religion or gender and promote equality of learning opportunities
- To ensure high quality of teaching and learning by monitoring the performance of both staff and pupils, highlighting areas of excellence and potential for improvement

3. EFFECTIVE TEACHING & LEARNING

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

Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn. They reflect on how they learn, what helps them to learn and ways of overcoming difficulties in learning. Self review and peer review strategies are used, as well as planned plenary sessions to review key learning objectives and assess the level of understanding.

Pupils should be challenged to work at a level which enables them to raise their attainment.

Pupils are offered opportunities to learn in different ways. These include:

- investigation and problem solving
- whole class work
- responding to audio-visual material
- research and finding out
- effective questioning
- debates, role plays and oral presentations
- group work
- use of ICT
- designing and making things
- pair work
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest
- reflecting on and evaluating what has been learned

3.1 Effective Learning

Where learning is effective, pupils:

Are motivated to:

- take an active interest in their studies through encouragement and support from their teachers
- improve their performance and be willing to learn from areas for development as well as strengths
- enjoy lessons and respond readily to the challenge of the tasks set
- demonstrate, in assessments and tests, that they are performing well in relation to their age and ability
- care about the presentation of their work and look after resources

Take responsibility for:

- their learning
- evaluating their achievement of learning objectives and outcomes
- concentrating on tasks set and listening attentively when appropriate
- developing the confidence to raise questions, to try to find answers and ask for help when needed
- helping each other and working collaboratively as well as independently
- developing over time the ability to work autonomously and to take responsibility for their own learning, increasingly taking initiative

Have developed or are developing the following skills:

- persevere with tasks they find difficult without losing heart
- respond positively to opportunities given to extend their learning
- be able to modify and redraft work
- meet deadlines
- retain knowledge, apply it in unfamiliar contexts and make connections with other work

Understand the implications of social learning by:

- arriving on time to lessons, appropriately equipped
- being able to adapt easily to different ways of working
- evaluating their own work and making realistic judgements about it
- being able to decide the best methods to adopt and the resources they should have
- communicating information and ideas, offering comments and explanations
- feeling that they are valued by their teachers and that their achievements are being recognised

3.2 Effective Teaching

The teaching focus is on motivating pupils and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding.

Teaching is most effective when parents support the teaching staff at the school by expecting their children to achieve their best. The partnership between home and school is a vital element in the success of every pupil and must be developed to the best possible degree.

We believe that pupils learn effectively when the teacher provides:

- thorough preparation
- lessons where pupils' previous learning and interests are built upon, through purposeful application of knowledge to different situations
- shared learning objectives which are clear to pupils and understood by them
- support for the learning of pupils with differing abilities

- opportunities to review and reflect on the learning
- clear expectations of what pupils are expected to achieve by the end of the session
- well-paced lessons
- thinking time before answering questions
- open-ended, thought provoking, challenging questions
- a planned programme of educational visits to reinforce and stimulate learning
- developmental feedback and constructive criticism of pupils' work

4. ROLE OF TEACHERS

All teachers should:

Make their lessons purposeful:

- through carefully planned, well structured and paced lessons
- by making aims and objectives explicit to pupils at the beginning of each lesson, task or topic and involving pupils actively in their evaluation of learning achievement
- through explicitly checking understanding and reviewing work covered in each task or topic
- by devising schemes of work which incorporate appropriate spiritual, moral and cultural elements
- by starting and finishing lessons on time

Make lessons interesting and stimulating:

- by showing enthusiasm for their subject and learning
- by devising imaginative and creative approaches to the development of knowledge and skills
- by varying teaching styles, learning activities and the learning environment to maintain pupils' interest and take account of learning styles
- by using praise and positive reinforcement to foster self esteem, motivation and confidence
- by regularly displaying examples of pupils' work and other relevant stimuli
- by encouraging pupils to demonstrate their skills through formal presentations, drama, debate and role play
- by using ICT and multimedia presentation when and wherever appropriate to enhance the learning experience and outcome

Create an orderly environment and manage classes efficiently:

- by matching teaching style to lesson objectives and group dynamic
- by organising physical resources in ways which will promote orderly classroom management
- by being consistent about classroom procedures and school rules
- by setting and marking suitable homework tasks regularly, following up any non-completion effectively as required
- by keeping up to date and accurate records in mark books and submitting assessment data as required, according to published deadlines
- by setting and achieving high standards of behaviour and motivation
- by regularly reviewing pupil grouping and seating to promote effective learning

Match learning activities and opportunities to all abilities and preferences:

- by using evidence of prior attainment to gauge pupils' individual capabilities
- by testing understanding and acquisition of knowledge through a variety of means

- by using appropriate differentiated materials and tasks which ensure pupils' active participation in lessons
- by setting high expectations for all pupils, rewarding achievements with praise

Develop positive and productive working relationships with pupils:

- through confident and assured command of subject matter, which is regularly updated
- through appropriate professional development, observations, discussions, and INSET
- by being clear with instructions, questions and explanations
- by understanding and promoting the value of focussed discussion and setting ground rules for speaking and listening
- by fostering mutual respect, including pupil to pupil, teacher to pupil and teacher to parent
- through actively promoting equal opportunities through the teaching and learning process
- by encouraging parents to support pupil learning
- by responding to all potential concerns regarding pupils within 48 hours and making sure that appropriate follow up action is taken

Use both formative and summative assessment to evaluate pupils' progress and to inform future teaching plans:

- by using a variety of formative, in-class assessment, relating to the subject area
- by marking consistently and positively in line with whole school policies
- by giving regular written and verbal feedback to pupils about their work
- by embedding self-assessment and peer assessment to improve learning
- by encouraging and trusting pupils to take responsibility for their own learning
- by checking progress against potential through the critical use of benchmark data

See the school's Assessment Policy for further details.

5. ROLE OF THE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Senior Leadership Team sets priorities and targets for improvement at whole school level based on evidence gained from monitoring procedures. They track progress made against the School Improvement Plan. Monitoring and evaluation principally take place through section and departmental reviews and classroom observations of teaching and learning.

A comprehensive review of teaching and learning takes place annually in order to gain a snapshot of standards. On-going reviews take place to focus on particular issues or to support where the need for development has been identified.

The aim is to:

- identify and share good practice
- evaluate the quality of teaching and set targets for improvement
- track progress on teaching and learning issues identified in the School Development Plan
- identify key aspects of teaching for development by subjects, departments and for the whole school
- support all teachers in improving standards of teaching and learning
- standardise monitoring procedures including lesson observations and work scrutiny