

**St. Mary's Roman Catholic
Primary School, Chepstow**



Teaching and Learning Policy

Last Updated: September 2012

School Mission and Vision Statements:

School Mission Statement

Learning for Life with Christ as our Light

School Vision Statement:

Based on our Catholic faith, St. Mary's Catholic Primary School seeks to promote the Gospel message of Jesus Christ as the foundation of its existence

We, as a caring community of learning, combine innovation and tradition to enable each individual to achieve their full potential.

As a school we:

Teach the Catholic faith, to help children grow in all aspects of their spiritual and moral development.

Recognise and encourage the uniqueness and value of each individual, by nurturing and developing each child's selfworth and ability.

Provide a balanced, differentiated and relevant curriculum in pursuit of high academic excellence.

Help create a Christian community, uniting the home, the school, the Catholic parish and the wider community

Welcome children of all faiths to join the school community.

Rationale

Teaching and Learning are at the centre of school life. Teaching is the means by which we offer, and put into practice, a curriculum which is broad and balanced, meeting the requirements of the Curriculum 2008 and Foundation Phase documents, Religious Education Framework and Personal, Social and Educational Framework. The policy outlines the good practice expected of all teachers and staff and should enable individuals to reflect upon their own strategies and style of teaching. It will also influence the way the curriculum is taught and ensure that our pupils experience a consistent approach throughout the school. This policy aims to ensure that the children at our school are provided with high quality learning experiences that lead to a consistently high level of pupil achievement.

WG's (2008) vision is that all young people should have 'the opportunity to reach their full potential'. NC 2008 will provide both opportunities and challenges and aims to be up-to-date and motivating for all learners.

Purposes

The purposes of this policy are to:-

- Promote and share understanding of what makes effective teaching and learning and ensure pupil entitlement.
- Promote the progress of all pupils.
- Provide an agreed basis on which to evaluate effectiveness in teaching and learning and so inform the school's self evaluation process.
- Support continuous professional development.
- Contribute to the effective delivery of performance management within the school
- Share good practice.
- Influence the school's improvement plan for improvement by informing curriculum planning and assessment.

Effective Teaching and Learning Principles

- Equips learners for life in its broadest sense.
- Engages with valued forms of knowledge.
- Recognises the importance of prior experience and learning.
- Requires the teacher to scaffold learning.
- Needs assessment to be congruent with learning.
- Promotes the active engagement of the learner.

- Recognises young children learn best through play.
- Fosters both individual and social processes and outcomes.
- Recognises the significance of informal learning.
- Depends on teacher learning.
- Demands consistent policy frameworks with support for teaching and learning as their primary focus.

Teaching and Learning Philosophy

Our school is a place of learning where all should have the opportunity to develop their skills and talents, to fulfil their potential and achieve excellence, irrespective of ability, disability, social background, culture or gender. We aim to produce learners who are motivated and effective, increasingly more responsible for their own learning, able to make use of the new technologies and those who will be able to learn and apply new skills effectively throughout their lives, whether in school, the workplace or at home.

Learning and teaching are processes of co-operative teamwork and the involvement of parents, governors and others in the community is welcomed and encouraged.

We believe that children learn best when they:-

- Are happy, feel valued, respected and cared for.
- Are engaged, appropriately challenged, stimulated and extended.
- Acquire new knowledge, skills, concepts and attitudes, develop ideas and increase their understanding.
- Are motivated to work to the best of their ability.
- Show interest in their learning and sustain concentration.
- Make good progress, achieve success and gain approval.
- Develop independent learning strategies.
- Understand what they are doing, how well they have done and how they can improve.
- Are given tasks which match or extend their ability.
- Are confident, feel secure and are aware of expectations.

All pupils are entitled to:-

- Teaching of good quality.
- Feedback on their progress.
- Clear targets for improvement.
- Advice and support.

In our teaching we enable children to:-

- Develop lively, enquiring minds to question and discuss rationally.
- Acquire knowledge and skills relevant to adult life.
- Be responsible for their own actions.
- Be aware of their effect on others.

- Respect the rights of others as being equal to their own.
- Understand and respect religious, moral and ethical values.

For teaching and learning to be successful and motivating for teachers and learners alike, it should promote:-

- A focus on developing learning rather than merely transferring facts.
- Collaborative learning where learners learn from each other in pairs and small groups.
- Active and interactive learning e.g. carousel in key stage 2.
- Develop thinking, especially questioning, planning, problem solving, creative and critical thinking skills.
- Determining success criteria so that learners are aware of what they can do, what they need to do to improve and how to do it.
- Reflection of what has been learned and how the learning has occurred.
- Assessment for learning.

Improved classroom practice will enable learners to:-

- Think for themselves.
- Improve the quality of their speaking and listening.
- Develop bilingual skills and the ability to work in two or more languages.
- Gain a deeper understanding of topics.
- Be more critical of evidence.
- Make reasoned judgements and decisions rather than jumping to conclusions.
- Understand and hasten their progress.
- Achieve better quality outcomes.
- Take greater responsibility for their learning.
- Develop increased self-confidence.
- Engage in self assessment and peer assessment.
- Be better prepared for the challenges of school and the wider world.

Effective Teaching and Learning

We recognise that teaching is most effective when teachers:-

- Demonstrate and model good knowledge skills and understanding when presenting and delivering sessions/topics.
- Challenge and inspire pupils.
- Use methods, approaches and styles which enable all pupils to learn effectively.
- Manage pupils well and secure high standards of behaviour.
- Use time, support staff and other resources effectively.
- Assess pupils' learning thoroughly and use assessments to help and develop pupils' progress.
- Target setting with pupils.
- Use assessment evidence to plan effectively, setting appropriate objectives that pupils understand and share success criteria.

- Use home/school liaison effectively to reinforce and/or extend what is learnt in school.

All teachers are entitled to:-

- Regular evaluation of their work.
- Feedback on their effectiveness.
- Professional development opportunities which support their continuing effectiveness and the needs of the school and the community

Teachers need to arrange time to observe, assess, reflect and review achievements with each child on a regular basis. The child should be involved in this process by the encouragement of self appraisal, target setting and in KS2 completion of learning diaries. Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process.

Our Learning Environment

Because children learn best when they feel happy, secure, confident & valued.

There will be evidence in the classroom of:-

- A familiar routine.
- Praise and respect for others and our environment.
- Talking and listening to adults and each other.
- Increasing independence and responsibility.
- Enthusiastic, creative and self motivated pupils learning.
- A caring attitude.
- Tasks they can succeed in.
- Positive attitudes towards taking risks in their learning.

Because children learn best when their surroundings are lively & interesting:

There will be evidence in the classroom of:-

- Stimulating displays reflecting a range of curriculum areas.
- Children's work being valued and celebrated.
- Inter-active display.
- Development of imaginative play.
- Wide variety of activities extension tasks, practical maths resources.
- Giving time to talk about their own interests.
- Well resourced reading area.

Because children learn best when they have access to a range of appropriate resources.

There will be evidence in the classroom of:-

- Organisation so that children know where things are.

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- Labelling appropriate to age group.
- Clearly marked and accessible learning areas.
- Children taking responsibility for the care of all resources.
- Allowance for experimentation in a safe and controlled way.
- Ease of access to frequently used resources.

Because children learn best when they have entitlement to the full range of the curriculum irrespective of ability or disability, social background, culture or gender:

There will be evidence in the classroom of:

- Teaching adapted for multi-sensory learning (VAK).
- Challenge for more able children.
- Appropriate support for less able children.
- Effective use of teaching assistants to support children.
- Resources which reflect a variety of cultures, beliefs and religions.
- Opportunities and resources which challenge gender, racial and cultural stereotypes.

Because children learn best when they have time to reflect and talk about their experiences:

There will be evidence in the classroom of:-

- Time for relevant talk and discussion, self and peer assessment.
- Talk being valued, through children and adults listening and responding to each other.
- Children discussing and completing tasks in pairs and groups.
- Development of active listening skills.
- Opportunities for reflection and concentration.

Because children learn best when they are making progress and are able to celebrate their achievements:

There will be evidence in the classroom of:-

- Praise and encouragement.
- Systems of reward.
- Children's work displayed with care.
- Analysis of work with teacher.
- Children's assessment of their work and setting of own learning targets.
- Shared reading stories across years.
- Sharing work with other teachers and children.

Because children learn best when they have opportunities for practical, relevant exploration of ideas:

There will be evidence in the classroom of:-

- Investigations.
- Problem solving.
- Opportunities for practical activities reflected across the curriculum.
- A variety of teaching and learning strategies.

Because children learn best when they are able to work collaboratively as well as independently:

There will be evidence in the classroom of:-

- Individual and collaborative work time allowed for children to consolidate and extend own learning.
- Flexible groupings related to the task in hand – mixed, set, ability, peer grouping, preferred learning style.
- Carousel teaching and learning in key stage 2.
- Child led learning in Foundation Phase.

Because children learn best when they know what is expected of them:

There will be evidence in the classroom of:-

- Clear instructions and focused learning and skills targets.
- Teachers checking children's understanding.
- The school's expectations and consequences clearly displayed in a way relevant to their age and level of understanding.
- Boundaries for behaviour.
- High expectations.

Because children learn best when work is matched to their individual needs:

There will be evidence in the classroom of:-

- Work planned for different abilities and learning styles.
- Support for identified children.
- Continuous assessment.
- A range of appropriate resources.
- Accessible learning areas which reflect a range of abilities.
- Children working on task.
- Children feeling secure, confident and valued.
- Questions which help children consolidate and extend thinking.

Because children learn best when learning is relevant to their lives in the wider community:

There will be evidence of:-

- Visitors representing different sectors of the community – local and wider community.
- Visits to places outside and within the local community.
- Topic work related to global issues.

Evaluating our Effectiveness

At St.Mary's, we recognise that teaching should always be evaluated in terms of its impact on pupils' learning and what makes it successful. Learning should be evaluated as effective when it secures good progress for all pupils.

Teaching and Learning can be evaluated through:-

- Identifying the sharing of good practice within school.
- Monitoring the range of teaching and learning activities.
- Review and updating of teaching and learning training.
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of any training undertaken.
- Planning.
- Assessment records and evidence.
- Classroom observation.
- Learning walks.
- Observing pupils at play.
- Assessment for Learning strategies.
- Self and peer assessment.
- Data analysis.
- Moderated work.
- Staff and pupil interviews/questionnaires.
- Parent consultations/forums.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review of the Policy

The policy will be monitored and its success evaluated by the SMT and Governing Body. A review of the effectiveness of the policy will be carried out involving all staff.

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Signed: _____ (Head Teacher)

Signed: _____ Chair of the Governing Body

Date: _____

Review date: _____