

# Dorchester Primary School



## Learning and Teaching Policy

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## **Introduction**

At Dorchester Primary School, we are dedicated to developing an enduring love of learning, enabling children to strive for academic, physical and artistic success. We work in partnership towards the aims of the school by providing high quality learning experiences within the school environment and in the interactions between all members of the school community. We believe that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone. Through our teaching, we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary in order that they can play an increasingly useful and positive role in society and make informed choices about their lives both now and in the future. We believe that high quality teaching and learning experiences support children to develop their character, cultivate positive learning behaviours and a strong moral compass which reflect our restorative values.

## **Aims and Objectives**

At Dorchester our vision is 'Working together in a safe and inclusive environment to develop creative, disciplined and aspirational pupils.'

We aim to provide an inclusive, rich and varied learning environment that allows children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential. This policy summarises our expectations and common working practices. It reflects what has been agreed in terms of approach and consistency and makes explicit the best practice to which the school aspires. It also reflects the aims and objectives of the school and supports its vision.

We aim to deliver a high-quality education to all children by providing teaching that:

- Recognises the needs, interests and aspirations of all children; provides opportunities for all pupils to make the best possible progress and attain the highest personal achievements;
- Provides a supportive, healthy and safe environment;
- Develops children's confidence, resourcefulness and resilience and the self discipline to learn and work independently and collaboratively;
- Promotes high expectations celebrating both success and effort; ensures that children can develop as literate, numerate and technologically competent individuals;
- Provides rich and varied contexts and experiences for pupils to acquire, develop and apply a broad range of knowledge, skills and understanding;
- Provides a curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, physical, mental and emotional development of the pupils;
- Encourages children to respond positively to the opportunities, challenges and responsibilities of a rapidly changing world;
- Fosters children's self-esteem, self-worth and emotional well-being; helps them build positive relationships with other people;
- Develops children's self-respect and encourage children to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others;
- Encourages children to value and respect the diversity in our society and the environment in which they live and, in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people;
- Enables children to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this community; encourages children to become active and responsible citizens, contributing positively to society
- Challenges and supports to empower all children including those with special needs and the most able
- Supports the family learning together

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Learning and teaching is a shared responsibility and all members of the school community have an important part to play (see the Home-School agreement). All members of the school community work towards the school's aims by:

- esteeming children as individuals and respecting their rights, values and beliefs;
- fostering and promoting good relationships and a sense of belonging to the school community;
- providing a well-ordered environment in which all are fully aware of behavioural expectations;
- offering equal opportunities in all aspects of school life and recognising the importance of different cultures;

- encouraging, praising and positively reinforcing good relationships, behaviours and work;
- working as a team, supporting and encouraging one another.

## Teachers

Teachers will endeavour to:

- provide a challenging and stimulating curriculum designed to encourage all children to reach the highest standard of achievement;
- recognise and be aware of the needs of each individual child according to ability and aptitude;
- ensure that learning is progressive and continuous;
- be good role models, punctual, well prepared and organised;
- provide clear information on school procedures and pupil progress;
- have a positive attitude to change and the development of their own expertise;
- establish links with the local community to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life;
- work collaboratively to develop a shared philosophy and commonality of practice.

## Parents/Carers

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

- Holding open classroom and workshop events to explain school strategies, and providing information on statutory assessment procedures;
- Sending information to parents at the start of each term outlining the work that children will be studying;
- Holding termly parents' consultations where the children's progress and achievement is discussed and work is shared between parent, child and teacher; sending annual reports to parents in which we explain the progress their child has made and indicate how the child could improve further;
- Explaining to parents how they can support their child with homework, read together at home and support pupils with their projects and investigative work;
- Holding 'Stay and Play' and transition days where parents can meet staff and spend time in classes;
- Communicating with parents frequently via Dojo, social media, and the school website regarding learning activities taking place;
- Inviting parents to celebration assemblies where children can present their work and achievements.

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

- Ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible;
- Ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and P.E. kit etc;
- Do their best to keep their child healthy, well rested and fit to attend school;
- Inform the school if there are matters outside of the school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school;
- Participate in discussions concerning their child's progress and attainment;
- Promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general;
- Ensure their child reads their school reading book at least three times per week and shares a story for pleasure with their child;
- Support the school's homework policy and give due importance to any homework;
- Actively support and fulfil the requirements set out in the home/school agreement.

## Pupils

Pupils are encouraged to support the school's aims by:

- attending school in good health, maintained by adequate diet, exercise and sleep;
- attending school regularly and punctually;

- being organised, taking letters home promptly, etc;
- reading at home regularly and returning these books to school on the set dates;
- conducting themselves in an orderly manner in line with the expected behaviour policy;
- taking increased responsibility for their own learning.

**School Council**

Each class nominates a school councillor to represent them. The school council meet regularly with the Deputy Head to discuss matters which involve school improvement. Each school councillor is responsible for collecting the views of their class on improvement issues.

**Local Tier Board**

Our local tier board determine, support, 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;
- ensure that staff development and performance management systems promote good quality teaching and learning;
- monitor the effectiveness of the school’s teaching and learning policies through the school self-review processes. These include reports from subject leaders and the head teacher’s report to the LTB.

**Planning the curriculum**

The foundation for curricular development is the School Improvement Plan, developed through a process of collaboration between staff, and approved by the School Stakeholders Group.

The school follows the National Curriculum for England, 2014 and the EYFS Framework 2023. As well as covering the aims and objectives set out in the National Curriculum programmes of study and EYFS framework, the school takes account of the local needs, interests and geography of the school and its learners.

The curriculum leaders are responsible for creating the long-term plan. Phase teams work alongside the curriculum leaders to create termly pacing plans, which ensure all subjects receive appropriate coverage. With the support of the curriculum leaders and senior leadership team, subject leaders, create progressive long term and medium-term plans for their subject. Teachers and phase teams are responsible for short term planning as well as creating opportunities for pupils to apply knowledge and skills across the curriculum.

Alongside the curriculum leaders, subject leaders have a variety of roles. These include:

- taking the lead in policy development and leading the implementation of schemes of work or MTPs designed to ensure progression and continuity in their subject throughout the school;
- supporting colleagues in their development and implementation of the MTPs, and in assessment and record-keeping activities;
- monitoring progress in their subjects and advising the Head teacher on action needed; taking responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central resources for their subjects;
- using release time to support colleagues;
- keeping up-to-date through reading and attending relevant courses.

The coverage of our curriculum is on a two-year rolling cycle and is reviewed regularly by the curriculum leader.

Timetabling of subjects is set out below:

	Daily	Weekly	Weekly (alternating half terms)	Bi-weekly	Blocked
Maths	✓				

Reading	✓				
Ears for fluency	✓				
Book Talk	✓				
Phonics (EYFS-Year 2)	✓				
Writing	✓				
Spelling	✓				
Handwriting	✓				
Science		✓			
RE		✓			
PE		✓			
PSHE		✓			
Music		✓ or		✓	
MFL (KS2)		✓ or		✓	
Computing		✓ or			✓
History			✓		
Geography			✓		
Art			✓		
D and T			✓		

### **Organisation of the Learning Environment**

The learning environment will be managed in such a way as to facilitate different styles of learning.

Opportunities will be made for:

- whole class teaching;
- group work, organised according to appropriate criteria (i.e. ability, mixed ability, friendship, etc);
- one to one teaching;
- collaborative learning in pairs or groups;
- independent learning.

The classroom will be organised to facilitate learning and the development of independence. For example:

- Resources in each area will be grouped according to curriculum subject;
- Book corners will be comfortable, attractive and will make choosing a book for pleasure easy;
- Little Wandle phonics resources will be displayed in each classroom;
- Areas for imaginative play in EYFS will be enhanced regularly in order encourage purposeful play, learning and role play;
- Pupils will be involved in the maintenance and care of all equipment and resources.

Classrooms will have some consistent resources support areas in being communication friendly spaces:

- Backing paper will be pale green, pale blue, beige or brown to reduce visual over-stimulation;
- Posters indicating 'Adults who work in this room' which are kept up-to-date daily;
- Recognition boards which show the five school values (respect, resilience, empathy, tolerance and self-belief);
- Whole-class visual timetables.

Classrooms, corridors and intervention teaching spaces provide a stimulating and purposeful learning environment, which sets the climate for learning and promotes the independent use of resources and high-quality work from pupils. All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction books. Working walls in KS2 reflect learning in Maths and Literacy.

Environments in EYFS and KS1 support pupil's independence. Environments also include topic related displays which are changed at least once a term.

Head Teacher awards are given weekly to celebrate individual academic or behavioural achievement.

We ensure that all tasks/activities that pupils do are safe. When we plan to take the pupils out of school, we carry out risk assessments and seek permission from parents (where the visit is beyond the local environment and/or outside of the school day). The EVC leaders and head teacher is responsible for checking that the educational visit is safe and appropriate risk assessments are in place.

### **Effective teaching**

At Dorchester we believe that successful teaching is:

- confident – teachers have a clear understanding of subject knowledge and setting objectives;
- a clear understanding of the 'small steps' in learning and sharing/ creating this with pupils;
- high expectation – there is optimism about, and high expectation of success;
- well planned – there are adaptations which match curricular objectives and needs of all pupils;
- interactive – pupil's contributions are encouraged, expected, extended;
- characterised by high quality oral work;
- well paced – lessons keep pupils' attention by matching pace to pupil learning needs;
- informed – by assessment outcomes

At Dorchester teachers reflect and evaluate their lessons so that we can modify and improve our teaching in the future to maximise progress for each child. In order to ensure equality of access and effective matching of tasks to needs, teachers will employ a variety of teaching strategies. This will include:

- provision of an integrated curriculum;
- teacher observation and listening;
- discussion and questioning (open and closed as appropriate);
- feedback which meets pupils learning needs in the moment;
- previewing and reviewing work;
- instructive and interactive teaching;
- providing opportunities for reflection by pupils against shared success criteria or their personal thoughts and feelings;
- demonstrating high expectations;
- providing opportunities for repetition/reinforcement;
- providing encouragement, positive reinforcement and praise;
- making judgements and responding to individual need;
- intervening, as appropriate, in the learning process in order to encourage development;
- providing all children with opportunities for success;
- using a range of communication strategies – verbal and non-verbal.

Activities show a balance in terms of individual, paired, group and whole class work. Group work may include friendship, matched ability, mixed ability, etc, appropriate to the activity. Collaborative learning and learning discussions are encouraged.

Opportunities will also be made available across the curriculum to develop particular key skills including:

- application of number;
- communication;
- computing skills
- problem solving;
- working with others;
- drafting and reworking to improve own learning and performance.
- creative thinking;
- enquiry;
- reasoning;

- evaluation.

All staff make a special effort to establish good working relationships with all children. The schools ethos is based on Restorative Practice. We treat the children with kindness and respect. We treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All our teachers follow the school policy with regard to behaviour and classroom management. We praise children for their efforts and, by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. (see Behaviour Policy)

We deploy achievement support assistants effectively to work with individual children and with small groups. Their work is planned for and overseen by the class teachers and/or the SENDCo. Classroom support is also available in the form of students and volunteers. These are used at the discretion of the class teacher.

### **Structure of Lessons**

Our aim is to maximise learning time and opportunities and so in order for us to do this, the following principles will be adhered to by all staff:

- Lessons start promptly;
- Resources are planned and prepared before the lesson;
- Lessons will (where applicable) be linked to previous learning or teaching;
- Lessons in the wider curriculum will:
  - Revisit/ recap learning and from a previous topic or year group;
  - Revisit/ recap learning from the unit of work so far;
  - Revisit/recap learning from the previous lesson;
  - Introduce new learning in small steps.
- Vocabulary specific to the learning will be explicitly taught and pupils will be encouraged to apply new vocabulary correctly;
- The teacher will use questions to motivate, stimulate, assess and keep pupils on track
- The teacher will ask challenging questioning to probe pupils' understanding and enable pupils to work at 'greater depth'
- The lesson should have a good pace and structure to it, activities will vary to respond to pupil's different ways of learning
- Usually, each lesson will have a plenary which will reinforce the learning objective and clarify key things that the pupils have learnt
- Where possible, pupil's work will be marked/ evaluated with them.

### **Appropriate challenge**

So that we always have the highest possible expectations of individual learners and so they can demonstrate what they can do, understand and achieve, teachers will differentiate the curriculum according to individual needs by:

- pace;
- content;
- task;
- resources;
- autonomy;
- outcome;
- teacher/adult support.

The principles of this Teaching and Learning policy apply to all pupils, including those with SEND. Support plans detail targets and requirements for support and intervention including communication, social skills, physical development, resilience and independence. Pupils with special educational needs may receive support provided by the class teacher, an achievement support assistant, wellbeing support worker or SENDCo where appropriate. Additionally, advice is sought from relevant external support agencies when and where the need demands it. (See Special Educational Needs Policy)

## **Assessment for Learning**

At Dorchester Primary School we recognise that successful teaching takes account of children's prior learning and must ensure continuity and progression. We believe that formative assessment furthers and deepens learning, underpinned by confidence that every child can improve and an awareness of the importance of children's high self-esteem. Formative assessment strategies include:

- creating a positive learning environment;
- focusing all feedback on specific performance improvements which can be acted on;
- engaging learners by posing problems and challenging thinking;
- providing opportunities for learners to meet the challenge in a variety of pairings and with multiple ways of representing their understanding;
- creating space for reflection and meaningful dialogue;
- hinge questions
- reviewing what has been learned, how it was learned and how it will be used.

We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in formulating assessment criteria based on specific learning objectives; being actively involved in the assessment and improvement of their work and that of others; reviewing the way they learn, and reflecting on how they learn, what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn.

For further information, please refer to the school's Assessment policy and Marking and Feedback policy.

## **Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

Regular assessments are made of pupils' work in order to establish the level of attainment and to inform future planning (see Assessment Policy). Formal summative assessment is carried out at the end of each National Curriculum Key Stage (i.e. in Years 2 and 6) through the use of SATs and teacher assessment. Children's independent application of phonics is tested at the end of Year 1 and re-tested where necessary in Year 2. Half-termly assessments are completed in phonics in EYFS and Year 1. Mental maths and arithmetic tests are carried out bi-weekly and appropriate teaching is planned to support children's future mathematical fluency. Initial baseline assessment is used in Reception/Early Years within six weeks of starting school and Foundation Stage Profiles are maintained. Formative assessment is used to guide the progress of individual pupils. These are shared with the child and parents to encourage partnerships in learning.

Feedback to pupils about their own progress is achieved through discussion and the marking of work. (see Marking and Feedback Policy)

Cross phase continuity is ensured by:

- pre-admission meetings with parents; home visits in EYFS
- transition meetings between class teachers at the end of each year;
- liaison meetings between Year 6 teachers and those from prospective secondary schools;
- visits to secondary schools by Year 6 pupils;
- transfer of pupil records of progress and summative assessment results.

Records of progress kept for each child are:

- updated as a minimum annually by teachers;
- examined by class teachers at the start of each academic year as they prepare for a new class;
- retained throughout the child's time at the school and appropriate records passed on to other schools when pupils leave.



Reporting to parents is done three times a year through consultations and through an annual written report. Results of individual pupils' assessments are made available to the parents concerned and the overall statistical profile (but not individual results) is made available to parents, the LTB, LA and national government.

### **Effective Learning**

Teachers at Dorchester feel that pupils learn best when:

- they are happy, healthy and alert – receptive and positive
- they are interested and involved – learning is relevant and stimulating
- the purpose of a task is understood – they understand why they are doing it
- they feel secure – in terms of environment, relationships and learning
- they feel valued – teachers and other adults care about their development as learners
- they have opportunities to explore and take risks
- they are actively involved, making choices and taking responsibility in their learning
- they have an element of control and can work with independence
- they receive positive feedback and praise for achievements
- the learning environment is well-organised and resources are easily accessed
- tasks are adapted- matched to the child's needs
- learning is built on existing knowledge and experience – clearly defined small steps
- they have opportunities to talk about their work, reflecting, discussing and sharing ideas
- the teacher is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and motivated
- they have clearly defined targets which they can successfully achieve e.g. appropriate time scale

Effective learning is ensured through the process of monitoring successful teaching (see monitoring policy) and pupil's learning outcomes i.e. Baseline Assessment, reading ages and SAT results (see assessment policy).

### **Resources**

Classroom and central resources are the responsibility of classroom teachers and subject leaders who ensure that:

- there is a range of appropriate, accessible and labelled resources available which pupils can select suitable to the task in hand;
- all children know where classroom resources are kept and the rules about their access and use;
- children are encouraged to act independently in choosing, collecting and returning resources where appropriate;
- children work together to establish an attractive, welcoming and well organised environment engendering respect, care and value for all resources.

Each classroom will be equipped with a basic set of resources and books appropriate to the age range. Specialist resources will be stored in the appropriate curriculum resource cupboard/area, and will be regularly audited by the subject leaders. Consumables will be replenished as necessary. Staff may contact subject leaders with suggestions for specialist materials which may need ordering.

Pupils will be taught how to use all resources correctly and safely, with care and respect and with regard for Health and Safety and waste. Care will be taken to ensure that resources reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of our society, and that all pupils have equality of access.

At Dorchester Primary School the use of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum is valued and these are used throughout the school to widen children's experiences and support learning across a range of subject areas.

Time is a resource that we value. To maximise its use:

- as children progress throughout the school they are encouraged to take greater control of their own learning, including their use of time;
- opportunities for learning are maximised by ensuring that tasks are made specific by focused objectives;
- teachers will encourage pupils to work within given time scales, and will facilitate the effective use of time through the provision of appropriate resources and planning extension activities;

- all children engage in useful activities upon entering the classroom and know what to do between the end of an activity and the end of a session.

### **The Monitoring and Evaluation of Practice**

Pupils' work will be monitored and moderated regularly by the subject leaders and the wider senior leadership team. A termly review of monitoring procedures is held with all members of the teaching staff in the form of Pupil Progress Meetings which includes discussions around the impact of the interventions that are used.

Subject leaders are responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of their subject. This involves various activities such as discussions with teachers and/or pupils, shared teaching, monitoring books and/or planning and lesson visits. They will also check that long and medium-term plans are providing the coherence, progression, continuity and depth necessary.

Lesson visits are carried out by the wider Senior Leadership Team (SLT) on a regular basis. (See Monitoring Policy.)

Annual reviews for teachers and support staff take place, when goals are reviewed and new ones set. In addition, mid-term reviews take place to agree any action/support needed to work towards goals set. (See Appraisal Policy)

The school has an open-door policy, encouraging parents/carers to call in for informal discussions at convenient times.

### **Training**

All our teachers reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and plan their professional development needs accordingly. We do all we can to support our teachers in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice. (See Appraisal Policy)

To support staff, we:

- Provide training in learning and teaching strategies, curriculum areas and assessment for learning
- Provide relevant documentation
- Give feedback to individuals or groups through monitoring activities
- Facilitate in-lesson coaching;
- Provide CPD through practise times;
- Provide opportunities for staff to identify their own training needs through the appraisal process
- Provide opportunities for staff to engage in collaborative development and research opportunities with their colleagues

### **Monitoring and Review**

We are aware of the need to review the school's Learning and Teaching Policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in curriculum, developments in technology or changes in the physical environment of the school.

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Deputy Head teacher/Learning and Teaching Lead. At every review, the policy will be shared with the Stakeholders Group. All teaching staff are expected to read and follow this policy. The Deputy Head/Learning and Teaching Lead is responsible for ensuring that the policy is followed. The Deputy Head teacher/Learning and Teaching Lead will monitor the effectiveness and consistency of teaching and learning practices across the school, through monitoring and moderation of pupils' work, lessons visits, environment monitoring, pupil progress meetings and planning/phase meetings.

### **Links with other policies**

This assessment policy is linked to:

- Curriculum policy

- Early Years Foundation Stage policy and procedures
- Marking and Feedback Policy
- Monitoring Policy
- CPD policy
- Assessment Policy
- Appraisal Policy
- SEND policy
- Home School Agreement

Reviewer: Assistant Headteacher