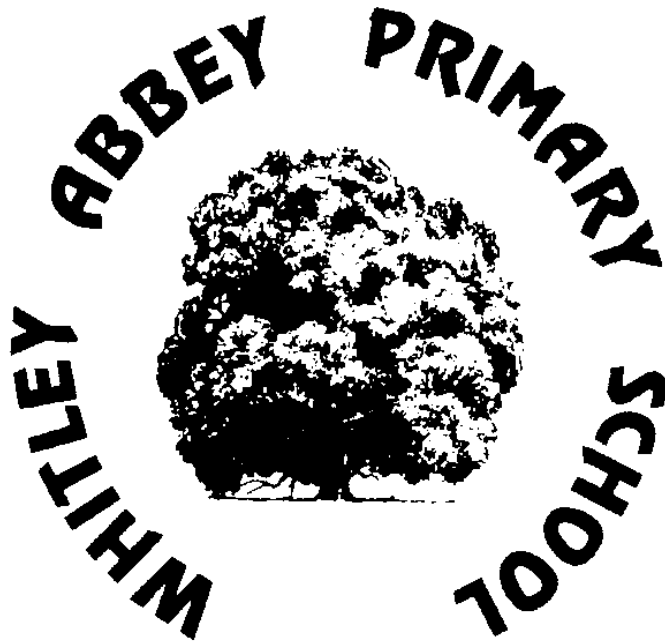**Whitley Abbey Primary School**

Learning and Teaching Policy

Reviewed October 2018

Next review October 2020

Whitley Abbey Primary School Learning and Teaching Policy

Introduction

Our aim is to enable our pupils to be resilient, resourceful, responsible learners who have the confidence, skills and attitudes to be successful life-long achievers.

Through this policy we aim to promote best practice and to establish consistency across the whole school. It aims to ensure that the children are provided with high quality learning experiences that lead to a consistently high level of pupil achievement and attitude.

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 future lives. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives.

The supportive learning environment

The emotional environment

All adults are responsible for providing a caring, supportive and stimulating learning environment in which all children are helped to reach their emotional and academic potential.

Children learn best when they feel safe to take on challenges, are interested and motivated and feel valued. We recognise the importance of building positive self-esteem in children.

Children develop positive learning behaviours through embedding the principles of a growth mindset into school curriculum and daily life.

The essentials of positive self esteem

- Belonging: each child has a contribution to make, we value and encourage these
- Aspirations: every pupil is encouraged to work towards their achievable goal. Teachers have high aspirations for themselves and the children they teach
- Safety: Consistency in expectations and standards help pupils feel safe. Clear boundaries are set and good behaviour recognised and rewarded
- Identity: a sense of self knowledge is supported by the belief that individuality is not threatened by undue pressure to conform.
- We celebrate our differences and encourage children to learn from and thrive within our diverse community.
- Challenge: acquiring coping strategies and building resilience are important for development and learning.
- Children are taught to take risks and learn through mistakes.
- Success: teachers reinforce success and build an environment where risks can be taken.
- Success is celebrated as part of our learning culture
- Children are encouraged to choose challenges which allow them to take risks in a supportive environment.

We create a supportive learning environment by:

- Encouraging a 'can do' culture – getting stuck should be seen as a learning opportunity.
- Scaffolding is provided, and problem solving strategies taught to ensure children know how to move on with resilience and resourcefulness.
- Having and expressing high expectations
- Modelling fairness, consistency and problem solving. Ensuring all adults act as positive role models
- Separating the person from the behaviours
- Welcoming each child into the classroom and smiling
- Using positive language and praise – use 3 positives to every negative
- Providing opportunities to develop children's emotional intelligence
- Providing opportunities for success
- Making expectations and boundaries clear by describing the behaviours we want
- Following the school behaviour policy consistently and our Code of Conduct
- Developing the use of Growth Mindset behaviours through our Super heroes (see appendix)
- Using our Learning Mentors and Teaching Assistants to support both individual and groups of children

Pupil Groupings
All classes organise their children into cooperative learning groups using the 'Kagan' model as follows:
Children are organised in groups of four mixed ability children, each child has three children they can work with, including a shoulder partner and face partner
Teachers ensure that groups work cooperatively by using 'kagan' structures throughout their lessons and for fun.
Teachers and teaching assistants should work with groups of children who are drawn from the whole class and need support, development or extension in a particular skill. It is very important that children do not feel that they are in the 'lowest' group.

Use of Challenges
Bronze, Silver and Gold Challenges. This will help them to understand themselves as learners and have more ownership of what they need to do in order to learn and succeed.
-Change the level of difficulty each time - Pupils will actually look at the mathematics to work out their level rather than going straight for the easiest/hardest option
There will need to be lots of discussion and encouragement in classes to get children to self-select challenges, particularly if we want them to take a risk.
In Year 1 this will need to start with a very simple task, so that children get the concept.

The physical environment
There are positive effects on standards and motivation of pupils associated with the physical environment. Factors include the use of displays, music, the use of resources including ICT, the consideration of pupil groupings in the physical layout of the room. Teachers are responsible for ensuring classrooms are an exciting, stimulating and welcoming place to be by:

- Arranging furniture and space to create a safe flexible learning environment including a carpet focus area where age appropriate
- Creating a topic focussed environment which stimulates interest in the theme of study e.g. door display, themed book corner, role play area, topic displays using artefacts and books.
- Making sure the equipment is labelled and accessible to promote independent learning
- Creating a personal space for each student; labelling trays and pegs
- Creating a teacher space showing personal aspirations and interests

- Creating a focus area around the board. Look at the room from a child's eye level!
- Using music to 'set the scene'
- Teaching, and expecting, children to respect and care for their environment
- Ensuring classrooms are tidy and free from clutter to promote a calm, productive learning environment
- Creating a 'growth mindset' through displays and ethos
- Working walls for literacy and maths which clearly support the children in their learning journey.

Display (Refer also to display policy)

The aim of display is to enhance and accelerate learning and to build self esteem and belonging.
We use display to support and reinforce learning. Display should aid recall, stimulate further thinking, give new information, make connections, celebrate achievement, remind children of rules and targets and motivate children towards further learning. Each child should have the opportunity to have work displayed in school.
Working walls should support and extend current learning.

Each class should have:

- A display demonstrating the learning journey for the topic
- Literacy and maths working walls clearly supporting the learning journey.
- Literacy and maths targets shared and worked on with the children, relating to their current units of work or gaps in learning. These should be in the front of children's books and reflected on through marking and at the end of a unit of work.
- Class rules/ good listening posters/ anti bullying information/growth mindset and pshe work
- Learning tools in the form of key words for topic/literacy/maths, posters, prompts, number lines, spelling aids, punctuation pyramids, word banks, tool kits, success critieria, counters, numiconetc.
- Marking codes and target information
- Esteem raising well-presented displays of high quality work children's work that reflects their achievements
- Positive inspirational slogans
- Interactive displays reflecting current topic to promote investigation and curiosity including artefacts
- Displays that reflect the make-up of the school population i.e. positive images of culturally diverse groups, examples of community languages and images that challenge stereotypes of gender and disability
- Visual timetable on display at all times during the day using symbols where appropriate to support children with SEND.
- Up to date achievements for each class on the school website

The curriculum (see subject policies)

Teachers are responsible for maintaining a very good subject and pedagogical knowledge and for ensuring the best possible learning opportunities are planned, delivered and monitored. Teachers are expected to be the 'chief learners', attending courses, observing good practice, building and disseminating knowledge and best practice.

We use the objectives from the National Curriculum for literacy and numeracy to underpin the taught curriculum. The curriculum map outlines topics to be taught in each. Wherever possible, links are made to real life experiences to make the curriculum relevant. Links are made between areas of the curriculum with non-fiction reading and writing being taught through cross curricular links where possible. We aim to make the curriculum reflective of, and responsive to the cultural background of our pupils. We adapt the curriculum to the needs and interests of the class to engage the children.

Key schemes of work are used to support work in particular subjects, SLT. Subject leads and teachers work hard to keep the curriculum fresh and look for the best resources to support the children's learning. (See appendix for key schemes of work)

Focus weeks/days

Throughout the year we hold a series of focus days or weeks; these range from specific curriculum areas e.g. book week, science week, anti-bullying week, to health or community based events e.g. health week. Wow days often start topics and ensure the children are enthusiastic and excited about their learning. The aim of this approach is to raise the profile and enthusiasm for an area and to provide children with the opportunity to practice their skills and develop new interests.

The learning journey

Teachers are responsible for the planning, preparation and delivery of opportunities which enable learners, in relation to their starting points, to achieve very high standards. This requires a thorough knowledge of each individual in the class (through secure use of data analysis, prior attainment, targets, learning needs- special educational needs, language stage, cultural backgrounds and interests) it also requires very good subject knowledge with effective planning and stimulating use of strategies, resources and personnel to enable all pupils to learn effectively.

Teachers are expected to create a secure and friendly environment in which high levels of good behaviour are maintained. Our aim as teachers is to enable learners to thrive, enjoy and develop the skills and capacity to work independently and collaboratively making good progress in all aspects of their learning.

Structure

The present learning experience is explicitly sited between what has been learned and what is to come. Learning is incremental not packaged into discrete units; effectively connecting the elements of the learning journey enables pupils to see and make progress. The way lessons and units of work are structured reflects our understanding of the learning process. Key elements of this are:

- Knowing the key learning objectives for our year group and ensuring these are consolidated, for example times tables facts in maths, spag in literacy.
- Teacher subject knowledge which ensures teachers can teach objectives and vocabulary from previous years and following years.
- Ensuring that key gaps in learning are addressed before moving on.
- Ensuring that children have challenges which support their individual learning needs, be they SEND or greater depth and that children are supported in choosing challenges which ensure progress.

Connect

- Children's own interests, experience and prior knowledge are drawn upon as a starting point during wow days. Topic and units of work are introduced by sharing and mapped out together, where children share what they know and what they want to know – these are added to the class display..
- Key vocabulary is shared and developed throughout the topic.
- Link the learning to previous and future learning and ensure that key objectives and gaps in learning are addressed.

Describe the outcomes

- Learning objectives and challenges are shared, prominently displayed and referred to as a key element of throughout each lesson.
- Children collaborate to devise the success criteria as a class or group for key skills, led by the teacher, using modelled examples for example for letter writing, character description, vertical addition. These can then be added to the working wall and the skills transferred across the curriculum.
- Make the outcomes and reasons explicit using key phrases "By the end of today/ this unit we will be able to"
- Curricular targets for writing and maths are explicitly referred to and the skills needed to achieve them taught, throughout lessons. Each child has a target for writing, maths and reading (linked to whole class targets) which is stuck into their books and is regularly reviewed and updated, children know their targets and how to achieve them.
  - Differentiated challenges are shared each lesson and the children are encouraged to 'have a go'. Dialogue around the challenges is crucial as it encourages children to take risks and challenge themselves. Children are supported in choosing challenges which extend their learning and encouraged to try a more difficult challenge, or an aspect of it.
  - The audience and purpose for the learning task are shared whenever possible, to give tasks more meaning. Real life examples are used where possible and links made to children's lives.

Activate (See lesson structure check list appendix)

- Give the key information and vocabulary needed for the lesson
- Use a multi sensory approach
- Pose a range of pitched questions which engage curiosity and challenge learners to think deeply.
- Use speaking and listening activities, including use of talk partners, with thinking time
- Use random selection by lolly-sticks and Kagan structures to ensure engagement of all pupils
- Use a variety of groupings, particularly mixed ability groupings wherever possible to raise self-esteem, groups are created to support specific learning needs and tasks
- Set a range of different levels of skill based challenges and encourage the children to self-select, supporting where necessary, the dialogue for this is crucial in developing risk.
- Make it memorable – use props, stimulating resources, 'hooks', openers and music.
- Ensure tasks are clearly understood by using questioning and recall.

- Plan for a range of groupings to best meet the learning needs and to ensure are children have the confidence to 'have a go' and do not feel they are in the 'bottom group'.
- Minimise time spent out of class on interventions by targeting support, quality first teaching with targeted support where possible.
- Plan and deliver timed, high quality, fixed-time interventions only and ensure impact of outcomes is high, use data to access impact.

Demonstrate

- Provide opportunities for children to show they can use and transfer their skills across the curriculum.
- Take into account multiple intelligences by allowing choices in the ways children present /share their understanding, whether it be to a partner, group, whole class, another class or the whole school – look for different audiences for the children.
- Teach skills such as mind mapping
- Use movement as a demonstration and memory tool
- Use Activate and brain gym breaks to enhance learning potential
- Provide opportunities for collaborative, collective and individual activity
- Plan for a range of groupings to best meet the learning needs
- Insist on high standards of presentation and achievement, including hand writing.
- Ensure that greater depth children are always given the opportunity to work at greater depth wherever possible, including cross curricular work.

Review (refer to Marking Policy)

Teachers are responsible for ensuring feedback leads to improvements in learning, it should: build self esteem, encourage and motivate, support development, be relevant to the aims of the lesson and lead to progress.

- Planned review sessions happen during, at the conclusion (plenary)of learning experiences and at the beginning of next lessons.
- Opportunities for feedback, peer and self evaluation are built into all lessons.
- Children are taught to reflect on and evaluate their learning, progress towards their targets and the aims of a lesson using the success criteria and feedback to plan next steps in their learning.
- Teachers give planned time for reflection/review and for improvements to be made.
- Teachers give written and oral feedback in line with the school's policies on marking and assessment.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work hard to ensure the right feedback at the right time is given.

Questioning

The use of open and closed questioning is vital to teaching and learning. Questions are used to assess children's starting points, to deepen understanding and to check children's progress.

A range of question types should be used from literal to higher order. Children should be given thinking time and a range of strategies are employed in this school to facilitate a 'no hands up' approach: talk partners, think-pair-share, numbered point replies.

We teach children how to raise their own questions and how to use a range of techniques to find the answers to questions which have been posed. This is encouraged through our explicit use of Growth Mindset Superheroes (See appendix)

Learning styles

We recognise children learn in different ways and therefore plan and deliver a multi-sensory, differentiated approach to engage all learners using auditory, kinaesthetic and visual stimuli.
A wide range of resources, including those available on interactive whiteboards are available.

We recognise multiple intelligences and differing learning styles by providing a range of opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their understanding. These include opportunities for pupils to communicate ideas through speaking and listening, writing, music, drama, ICT and art.
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Equal opportunities

The delivery and content of lessons should be sufficiently differentiated to ensure all pupils can access and achieve within the curriculum. Teachers must take account of SEND, greater depth, disadvantaged and EAL needs when planning and teaching lessons to ensure learning opportunities are provided which match pupils' ability and potential.

Music

Music is used for a variety of purposes:

- To influence mood and atmosphere e.g. to energise or relax a class or to create a calm start or end to the day
- To demarcate time on a task e.g. using a timed piece of music for tidy up time, changing for PE or during handwriting
- To carry content e.g. through learning songs which carry subject content; learning with music enhances the ability to store and retrieve related information

Activate and brain gym

Activate and brain gym breaks are used as a means to ensure pupils are actively engaged in and ready for learning. They can be used before, during or after formal learning, and can used to help children understand and recall concepts and content and to improve coordination and physical skills.

Trips and visitors

We are fortunate to be located within easy reach of a variety of interesting and educational places which we use to enhance the curriculum and stimulate learning. Teachers should plan a minimum of one visit/visitor per half term with a range of experiences being provided across the year. Teachers must obtain written permission from parents/carers for out of city visits.

Working with others

We work with a number of agencies, schools and providers to enhance curricular and pastoral opportunities for all our pupils. We work with others in the community to broaden our pupils life experiences.

Parents

We actively encourage the participation of parents as partners in learning and aim to create a welcoming atmosphere. Parents are informed of their children's targets, learning foci and ways to support learning through consultation meetings. A range of learning opportunities is provided to parents both formal and informal, at their level and to support homework. All year groups over a variety of workshops throughout the year including: reading, maths, phonics, spag and SATs preparation.

Teaching and learning assistants

Teaching and learning assistants are shared across the school to support key groups of learners and individuals; teachers are responsible for the effective direction and deployment of TA's to support learning. Teachers involve teaching assistants in the planning and evaluation process. TA's and teachers should work with a variety of children across the week and are trained on specific high impact intervention programmes or support quality first teaching in class.

Specialist support

Additional support is provided to identified pupils so all children can access and fulfil their potential. Support may be given to support pupils with special educational needs, to pupils who speak English as an additional language, to support children with speech and language difficulties, children in need of counselling and pastoral care.

Homework (refer to homework policy)

Homework is an opportunity to reinforce what has been covered in lessons and to involve parents in their child's learning. Teachers are responsible for setting and marking homework in line with the school policy.

Monitoring

Standards are monitored across the school by the SLT, including phase leaders and maths and literacy subject leads. Standards are monitored in a variety of ways including reviews of planning and children's books, learning walks, observations, phase meetings, discussions, mentor and peer support. Teachers act on points for development in a professional way and are open to professional dialogue regarding standards in the class, their subject and in their phase. SLT share good practice with colleagues and encourage teachers to observe each other teaching.

Extended provision

We provide a varied menu of activities to support and enrich learning; these include lunch-time and after school clubs. These range from sporting activities to cookery, creative, dance and music .

The role of governors

Our governors on the Performance and Standards Committee determine, support, monitor, review and challenge the school policies and practice in 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 regular feedback from curriculum coordinators and the Head teacher.

The role of parents

We believe that parents 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 workshops for parents to explain our school strategies for teaching literacy, numeracy and health education
- Sending information to parents at the start of the year in which we outline the topics that the children will be studying during each term at school
- Keep parents informed via the Head teacher's newsletters, the school website and social media.
- Sending regular reports to parents in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can improve further
- Open sessions for parents are held throughout the year, enabling pupils to share their school work with parents
- Explaining to parents how they can support their children with homework. We suggest, for example, regular shared reading with very young children, and support for older children with their projects and investigative work
- We provide induction sessions for parents of new entrants to school which include our procedures in school, working with your child at home and our handwriting scheme
- We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies.
- Engaging in the use of new learning platforms which encourage parental involvement for example Purple Mash and Accelerated Reader.

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 equipment, 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
- Fulfil the requirements set out in the home/school agreement.

Monitoring and review

We are aware of the need to review the school learning and teaching policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school. School governors have agreed to review this policy every two years or sooner as required.

Appendices

Appendix i: Growth Mindset Superheroes

Appendix ii: Teaching and Learning lesson structure

Appendix i   **Growth Mindset Super Heroes**

Reciprocity Ranger

- Collaboration
- Listening
- Inspiration
- Imitation

Professor Resilience

- Perseverance
- Manage distractions
- Brain like a muscle
- Power of 'Yet'.

Captain Reflective

- Planning ahead
- Revising and reviewing
- Metalearning
- Magic of mistakes

Doctor Resourceful

- 3 B4 Me
- Questioning
- Making Links
- Reasoning
- Effort

Aspect	Coverage
Clear learning objective, which tells children what they will learn e.g. WALT add using vertical addition	
Lesson outcome – what the children will have achieved, how will they demonstrate this, clear teacher modelling of this.	
Links to 'big ideas': audience and purpose, real life skills and how it fits into current scheme of work.	
Recap prior knowledge	
Bronze, Silver and Gold Challenges which expand on the LO and develop key skills and targets, included in teacher modelling of task	
Success criteria are created with the children, are skills focussed and can be used across several lessons.	
Starter activity – using of different stimulae and learning styles	
Oral/mental recap of key skills and learning gaps for maths, spag and spelling – instant recall	
Targets – recap targets and ensure children know how to apply them to this task.	
Pacey start to lesson, children on task and working quickly, limited amount of listening time, maximum learning -	
Mini-plenaries using AFL to check understanding and keep children on track	
Re-visiting challenges throughout lesson to ensure children are extending their learning and 'having a go', encouraging children to try aspects of a more difficult challenge	
Kagan cooperative learning structures to ensure all children engaged in learning and explaining their understanding.	
Use of AFL at key points in the lesson- How well do the children know what they are learning? How well do you use AFL to accelerate/decelerate as necessary? How do you adapt the pace and urgency of the lesson to the pupil's needs?	
Teacher and TA have flexible groups depending of individual lesson needs	
GD children working on GD skills	
Children review their challenge and show the teacher 'prove what they have learnt' – by highlighting, underlining, demonstration.	
Plenary uses AFL to assess learning and may include feedback	
Self/peer review	

Appendix iii. **Curriculum Information**

Subject/curriculum area	Curriculum – Scheme of work	Approach
Across the whole curriculum	Cornerstones	Through foundation subjects
Literacy - Reading	Accelerated Reader	Individual reading with online quizzes and information
Literacy - Reading	Power of Reading	Daily whole class reading lesson relating to class text
Literacy - Reading	Group reading	Teacher/teaching assistant led group reading skills development and discussion at a level appropriate to the group.
Maths	White Rose Maths	Development of reasoning skills
Science		