Teaching and Learning Policy

Rooted in the community, branching into the future. Working together within a Christian environment to develop successful learners for life. We believe that children's full potential is best achieved when we all work together.

<mark>Reviewed March 2018</mark>

Flockton CE (C) First School
Policy

1. **Aims**

Any attempt to raise standards to raise standards in our school must be focussed on the classroom. Continued and sustained improvement is dependent upon improving the quality of teaching and learning that is taking place on a daily basis.

This policy is central to the school's purpose as a place of learning. It reflects our shared values and our aspirations for all members of the school community in their capacity as lifelong learners.

2. **Definitions**

At Flockton CE (C) First School, we define learning as:

- the process of building new concepts, knowledge, skills and attributes through a variety of experiences;

- the refinement of existing concepts, knowledge, skills, attributes and behaviours through thought, experience and shared communications;

- the development of personal characteristics;

- making sense of the world around us and discovering where we fit into it;

- a continuous, lifelong process of personal development.

3. **Learning How to Learn**

Our focus in the classroom is not only on what the children are learning, but also on how they are they learning it and how they can be supported to become better and more independent learners.

Lessons will often focus both on particular curriculum content and on particular skills and personal qualities that make someone a successful learner. We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn – what helps them learn, and what makes it difficult for them to learn.

We seek to foster in our pupils a 'growth mindset', where they believe that success in learning can be achieved through effort, persistence and response to feedback, rather than being 'fixed' by innate ability. As part of this initiative, we have begun to promote key 'learning behaviours' (see below) in the classroom and to encourage these through the awarding of weekly 'Branching Out' certificates We have also reviewed our approaches to feedback and differentiation in light of the 'growth mindset' approach.

4. **Our Learning Behaviours**

At Flockton CE (C) First School, we apply learning behaviours to all that we do. We articulate these to our children through marking and feedback; to our parents through awards, certificates, newsletters and reports; and to our governors through learning walks, monitoring visits and visits to school. We aim to demonstrate these learning behaviours as on a day-day basis in all areas of school life and ask that all members of our school community demonstrate these also.

Some examples of learning behaviours promoted at Flockton CE (C) First School are:

COURAGE: Have the courage to have a go.

CURIOSITY: Be curious about everything – take risks and try something new regularly!

STICKABILITY: Show commitment, dedication, perseverance and endurance in what you do – things in life may be hard but keep trying.

RESILIENCE: We all fail at times and make mistakes: dust yourself off, learn from your mistakes and start again!

HAPPINESS: Find happiness in the smallest of places… Flockton CE (C) First School is a happy place to be.

HUMILITY: Be humble and don't be afraid to show humility. Occasionally we 'drop a stitch'. We are

5. Principles of Effective Learning

We believe that children learn best when:

- they feel happy, comfortable and safe; (6.1)

- their confidence and self-esteem are high and they enjoy positive, trusting relationships with adults and peers; (6.2)

- they are challenged, encouraged and supported by peers and adults, including family; (6.3)

- adults and older children provide good role models as learners and members of the community; (6.4)

- the learning environment is stimulating and properly resourced; (6.5)

- teaching is authoritative, purposeful, positive, well-paced, varied and stimulating; (6.6)

- they are actively engaged in the learning process; (6.7)

- our teaching takes account of their individual needs and interests. (6.8)

6. Strategies used to Promote Effective Learning

1. To help children to feel happy, comfortable and safe, we will:
- implement appropriate induction and transition arrangements;
- smile at them, greet them and ask about their welfare;
- acknowledge and make time to listen to what they have to say;
- show them that we work closely with their families in support of their welfare and education;
- treat them equally, fairly and consistently;
- rigorously implement equal opportunity, anti-bullying and race equality policies;
- ensure that the school is visually attractive and welcoming;
- ensure that they feel 'ownership' through personal spaces, name tags, classroom responsibilities etc;
- provide opportunities for physical movement in learning activities;
- provide opportunities for relaxation/energising in and between activities;
- use music to create appropriate moods.

2. **To help build children's confidence and self-esteem and to enable them to develop positive, trusting relationships with adults and peers, we will:**
   - give them opportunities to take part in circle time, role play, show & tell, choose-do-review, class assemblies, school council etc;
   - make use of learning/talking partners, peer assessment and collaborative working;
   - give them opportunities to be positive role models;
   - use a range of reward systems;
   - display their work and help them to display their own work attractively;
   - look for opportunities to catch them doing well and to celebrate it;
   - ensure that they experience success and praise every day;
   - give constructive feedback verbally and in writing;
   - use positive language and encourage them to do the same;
   - acknowledge and celebrate their special days, including birthdays where appropriate;
   - talk to them about their own lives, hobbies, interests and cultural background;
   - celebrate variety in culture, religion and language;
   - show respect for them and their contributions;
   - Set an example by modelling positive relationships amongst staff and volunteers in school.

3. **To ensure that children are challenged, encouraged and supported by peers and adults, including family, we will:**
   - inform parents about the curriculum they will experience next;
   - communicate regularly with parents about their progress;
   - communicate to children's families that we value their contribution;
   - set homework appropriate to their age and ability;
   - involve them in self-assessment and the identification of appropriate new targets;
   - involve them in collaborative working;
   - involve them in peer assessment;
   - use target setting information and other assessment procedures to track their progress and identify their learning needs;
   - involve them in peer support, e.g. play leaders, buddies;
   - enable them to share achievements through displays, class assemblies etc.
   - provide a range of extra-curricular activities;
   - encourage past pupils to maintain contact.

4. **To ensure that adults and older children provide good role models as learners and members of the community, we will:**
   - encourage all school employees to be active, lifelong learners, who share their interest in learning with colleagues and children;
   - encourage parents to be lifelong learners who are actively engaged with their children's learning both in and out of school;
   - have high and clearly communicated expectations that every adult on the school premises will set a good example as a member of the community;
   - give children opportunities, motivation and encouragement to act as good role models and supporters of others;
   - maintain close links with S. James Church and its congregation.
   - invite members of the outside community to share with children their knowledge and experiences as learners and community members.

5. **To provide a stimulating and properly resourced learning environment, we will:**
   - ensure the interior and exterior of the building are clean, appropriately decorated and well maintained;
   - ensure that classrooms are tidy and free of clutter;
   - ensure appropriate temperature and ventilation are maintained;
   - ensure that children and adults have access to water as needed;
   - have appropriate resources according to the varying needs of the children;

- ensure that resources are accessible to children;
- use clearly labelled resources so that the children enjoy learning that is self-serviced;
- vary the learning environment, using outdoor spaces and out-of-school visits;
- set out informative, interactive and celebratory displays;
- provide comments and questions on displays to create a focus or a sense of awe and wonder.

6. **To ensure that teaching is authoritative, purposeful, positive, well-paced, varied and stimulating, we will:**
   - provide teachers and teaching assistants with day-to-day, line management support and a planned programme of continuous professional development;
   - take steps to ensure the personal well-being of members of staff;
   - provide a curriculum that is appropriate to the learning styles and needs of our children and that covers, and goes beyond, the statutory requirements;
   - plan lessons that are adapted to meet the needs of individual children and incorporate feedback from children's learning in previous lessons;
   - plan and deliver lessons and units of work that incorporate the principles of the Framework for Effective Teaching and Learning (appendix 1) with clear learning objectives and time limits;
   - provide time to monitor the effectiveness of our teaching through line management and subject management arrangements, including lesson observations, work scrutiny and scrutiny of teachers' planning and assessment records;
   - give children clear goals and time limits.

7. **To ensure that children are actively engaged in the learning process, we will:**
   - implement the Framework for Effective Teaching and Learning (appendix 1);
   - adapt our planning, taking into consideration the interests and learning styles of different cohorts;
   - ensure children are aware of the purpose of their learning;
   - ensure children are not passive learners for long periods of time;
   - use a wide range of resources creatively .

8. **To enable our teaching to take account of children's individual needs and interests, we will:**
   - implement a range of target setting, assessment and tracking procedures appropriate to their age;
   - involve them in self-assessment and target setting;
   - talk to them about their interests and incorporate those interests in our teaching;
   - take into account their preferred learning styles when planning activities;
   - fully implement any SEN and G&T policies and action plans.

A Successful Policy?

When the policy is successful, we will see children who:
- are confident, well-motivated, independent, yet collaborative learners;
- enjoy their learning and who maintain good relationships with adults and other children;
- have a sense of pride in their work at school;
- make good progress against their targets.

When the policy is successful, we will see teachers and teaching assistants who:
- are knowledgeable, skilled, confident, motivated and happy in their work.

When the policy is successful, we will see parents who:
- are fully engaged in their children's learning;
- are proud of their children's achievements.

Monitoring the Policy

The policy will be monitored in the following ways:
- observations of teaching and learning (staff)
- monitoring of work (staff / governors)
- learning walks and discussions with pupils (staff / governors)
- discussions at meetings (staff / governors)

This policy was drawn up by: The Staff

It was approved by staff: September 2014

It was approved by Governors: October 2014

Review Dates: September 2015✓
               March 2016 ✓
               September 2016✓
               March 2017 ✓
               March 2018 ✓ (to include information on growth mindset and learning behaviours)
Date of next review: March 2019

Signed:

.... (Head Teacher)

.... (Chair of Governors)

Appendix 1
Framework for Effective Teaching and Learning

Flockton CE (C) First School

1.1   We will use the five part framework of **opening**, **teaching**, **learning**, **review/reflect** and **close**. These phases are not discrete. They are interwoven and overlapping. They reflect a learning experience, not necessarily one lesson.

2.1   **Effective Opening**
      At the start of learning experiences, we will:

- ensure the class are settled and ready to learn;
- be aware of any possible barriers to learning (including those which are personal, social or emotional);
- have clear expectations of behaviour for learning during the lesson;
- take steps to capture the attention of the children, stimulate their curiosity and get them into a positive frame of mind;
- review previous learning and connect it to new learning;
- explain the purpose of the learning to be gained and encourage them to identify its relevance to the world and 'What's in it for me?';
- share the learning intentions (orally and/or displayed) using 'child speak' (I can / I will);
- provide children with the questions they will be able to answer and the skills they will have acquired by the end of the lesson/topic (see appendix 2: Success pointers);
- give children the 'big picture' by;
  - describing what they will be doing,
  - encouraging a sense of prediction, anticipation, curiosity, and positive expectation about the learning to come,
  - providing graphic, pictorial previews and overviews of the topic to be studied,
  - showing examples of what other children have produced/achieved.

2.2 Effective Teaching
In our teaching, we will:
- be secure in our subject knowledge;
- clear about the learning objectives and success criteria;
- use assessment for learning techniques to ensure children make progress during lessons and over time;
- start lessons promptly and maintain good pace throughout;
- be flexible in our approach and be willing to seize the moment;
- maintain a positive and pleasant working atmosphere using praise and positive language;
- use humour, drama, music, games, play and competition to enliven our lessons;
- provide opportunities for children to experience awe, wonder and reflection;
- ensure all children are actively engaged in the learning process;
- break the teaching content into logically arranged, manageable chunks;
- give clear, differentiated explanations and instructions;
- provide appropriate modelling and demonstrations in our teaching;
- input new information using combined visual, auditory and kinaesthetic strategies;
- enable children to understand and use their own learning preferences where appropriate;
- use whole class questioning and targeted, differentiated, closed and open-ended questions (incorporating 'what, how, why') to support our teaching and to assess understanding;
- encourage and respond positively to children's questions;
- adapt our teaching in the light of continuous assessment of children's progress;
- clearly direct and fully engage classroom support staff and adult helpers in the teaching and assessment processes.

2.3 Effective Learning
To promote effective learning, we will:
- ensure children are aware of personal targets and next steps for learning;
- plan opportunities for children to reflect and act on feedback given from previous learning;
- plan for opportunities to develop challenge, resilience, independence and risk taking in a supportive environment;
- give opportunities for children to learn in a variety of ways, using their multiple

intelligences and preferred learning styles;
- provide multi-sensory and 'first hand' learning experiences whenever possible;
- encourage children to be independent and to choose their own strategies for learning;
- use planning frames for children to structure thinking and work;
- engage children in a range of independent and collective/collaborative, group-based learning activities, including peer-teaching, peer-assessment, talking/work partners, hot-seating, role play etc;
- provide activities involving problem solving and creative thinking;
- set clear expectations for learning outcomes;
- ensure most tasks have time deadlines and that the children are aware of these;
- provide opportunities for children to use new knowledge and skills in a variety of contexts;
- encourage children to 'take risks' (risk being wrong) in their learning;
- teach active listening, thinking and learning-to-learn skills.
- be adaptable and willing to change our planning in response to key learning opportunities.

2.4 **Effective Review and Reflection**
To enable effective review of learning and children's reflection upon it, we will:
- use plenaries and mini plenaries to review learning; return to learning intentions; review progress and discuss next steps in learning;
- give positively worded, constructive oral and written feedback on their work and how they can improve;
- give feedback related to agreed targets;
- praise, reward and share success;
- provide children with opportunities to review and reflect upon what they have learned and how their learning might be applied to new situations;
- teach a variety of memory and recall techniques;
- enable individuals, pairs and groups to actively report back to others;
- enable children to actively share what they have learned and can do;
- train the children in assessment for learning techniques to enable them to ask questions of themselves and others (see appendix 3);
- give recognition to children who have taken risks in their learning.

2.5 **Effective Close**
At the close, we will:
- use a variety of stimulating activities to provide a clearly signalled, positive and uplifting note to the end of the learning experience.
- reflect on our teaching and ask ourselves the question: 'What do the children know now which they did not know at the start of the lesson?'

Appendix 2
Success Pointers

The purpose of success pointers are: to enable teachers and children to be sure about how to judge whether or not the learning objectives have been met. If the learning objective is seen as the 'house', then the steps to success are the 'bricks' used to build the house. Our success pointers are in bullet points and in child speak for easy access. They can be either process based or instructional.

Success Pointers may be phrased in the following ways:
• 'What I am/you are looking for is ….'
• 'How will I/you know you have….'
• 'What will I/you see….'
• 'I/you will know you have been successful if….'

• 'Remember to….' (could be a list of requirements)
• 'I can….'
• 'Top tips….'

Success pointers are shared, discussed and agreed with pupils. They are appropriately differentiated, (dependent on the lesson) to ensure all pupils can make progress towards the learning objective. They are used as a basis for the evaluation of the lesson by the teacher and children. This forms part of key questioning and plenaries. We insist on the use of plenary questions to support plenaries. These questions ensure that children reflect on their learning.

Appendix 3

Assessment for Learning (AfL) Checklist

At Flockton CE (C) First School we firmly believe and recognise that AfL (assessment for learning) is an integral part of teaching and learning. Assessment for Learning is a recognised and highly valued process used by pupils and their teachers to decide where pupils are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there.
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Peer and Self-assessment
We recognise that children will achieve more if they are fully engaged with their own learning process. We encourage children to actively assess their own learning, determining for themselves, whenever possible what they need to learn and why. Time is built in for pupils to reflect upon their own work and set targets. Children are involved in the discussion and agreement of steps to success.
They are guided within plenaries and mini plenaries to evaluate their progress towards a learning objective using the steps to success. Children are asked to self asses their work at the end of each lesson against the learning objective through a range of methods appropriate to their age and ability. Children are encouraged to ask themselves the following questions:
• Am I learning in the best way for me?
• What are my strengths and weaknesses?
• What do I need to do to improve?
• How am I going to make an improvement?
• What is really making me think?
• How will I know if my work is good?
• Do I know what to do if I am stuck?
• Can I identify what I have to learn?
• What can I remember and understand?

The following strategies may be used for peer and self-assessment, depending on age and ability:
Assessment Faces
Red – I don't understand
Amber/Orange – I'm nearly there
Green – I understand

Thumbs up / Thumbs down
This is used at any point during a lesson to ascertain understanding or feelings.

Peer Assessment
At Flockton CE (C) First School, we understand and value the importance of peer assessment as a supportive means of assessing each other's work. Peer assessment allows children to work closely together, use the steps to success to assess learning. Peer assessment is always carefully introduced so all children have clear boundaries and expectations. Children will always identify strengths first before identifying a next step.
Talk/Response Partners Children share with a partner the following:
• something new they have learnt
• what they found easy/difficult
• something they would like to learn in the future
• what has been done well
• what needs to be done to improve