

# **Ely St. John's School**



## **Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy**

**This policy encapsulates our practice in all  
areas of learning.**

**Updated: July 2017**

## **CONTENTS**

Introduction	Page 3
Our vision and aims	Page 3
Inclusion	Page 3
Effective teaching and learning	Page 4
Teaching and Learning Non-Negotiables	Page 5
Planning	Page 6
Appendix 1: Sharing learning objectives and success criteria	Page 8
Appendix 2: Effective questioning	Page 9
Appendix 3: Assessment	Page 10
Appendix 4: Marking and feedback strategies	Page 11

## **INTRODUCTION**

Learning and teaching is at the heart of Ely St. John's School. We aim to develop a love for learning within a creative curriculum where every individual is valued for his/her unique contribution. We wish to provide pupils with the knowledge and skills needed to become critical thinkers, ready to embrace local and global challenges. Learning in our school is a collaborative process between adults and children. Assessment for learning is an integral part of this process.

The aim of the Ely St. John's Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy is to make explicit and accessible the shared and agreed principles and practices upon which teaching, learning and assessment are based at our school across all areas of learning. Our aim is to minimise within-school variation, whilst at the same time celebrating the rich variety of experiences children will encounter throughout their time at Ely St John's.

## **OUR VISION AND AIMS**

At Ely St. John's we ...

- Provide a caring, friendly school community in which every child and adult feels valued and secure.
- Ensure that all children have equal access to broad, relevant and stimulating teaching.
- Have challenging but realistic expectations of each child.
- Develop open and enquiring minds.
- Promote independence, encouraging children to take responsibility for their learning and behaviour.
- Play a full and developing role in the local and extended community.

**We do this... The EJ Way**



Ely St John's people.....  
Look after each other  
Are proud to work together  
Are excited to learn new things  
Know how to share their thoughts and feelings  
Are kind to themselves

## **INCLUSION**

We aim to be a fully inclusive school community and to involve all members of the school community in decision-making and policy development. We regard staff, parents and children as undertaking a joint enterprise to make learning exciting, positive and meaningful for everyone. We are all members of a team working co-operatively to this end. Our aim is to provide the best possible learning experiences for all; this includes giving necessary support to individuals or groups of pupils who require something extra to meet their needs.

## **EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING**

At Ely St. John's we recognise that learning is a continuous process which involves acquiring knowledge, skills and concepts, and developing positive and worthwhile attitudes. The purpose of our teaching is to promote active learning.

### **Our principles for learning and teaching**

Good learning and teaching should:

- Set high expectations and give every learner confidence so they can succeed. This includes demonstrating a commitment to every learner's success, making them feel included, valued and secure.
- Establish what learners already know and build on it. This includes setting clear and appropriate learning goals, explaining them, and making every learning experience count. We structure and pace teaching so that children know what is to be learnt, how and why.
- Make learning vivid and real. We develop understanding through enquiry, creativity, e-learning, group problem solving and by making it relevant to the learners' wider goals and concerns.
- Structure and pace the learning experience to make it challenging and enjoyable. This includes using teaching methods that reflect the material to be learned, matching the maturity of the learners and their learning preferences, and involving high levels of time on task. We make creative use of the range of learning opportunities available, within and beyond the classroom.
- Develop learning skills and personal qualities. This includes developing the ability to think systematically, manage information, learn from others and help others learn. Confidence building and self-discipline are seen as vital.
- Make individuals active partners in their learning. This includes building respectful teacher-learner relationships that take learners' views and experience fully into account, as well as data on their performance.

Effective teaching and learning takes place in an environment in which:

- relationships provide a confident and positive atmosphere;
- a culture of self-evaluation prevails;
- there is room for reflection;
- learning is valued;
- there is mutual respect between all members of the school learning community;
- no-one is afraid of making mistakes; we see making mistakes as a way of improving;
- lessons are well-paced; teachers vary pace to match the task and children's needs.

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING NON-NEGOTIABLES**

### **Planning**

- Plans state the objectives and key skills to be taught for each unit of work.
- Teachers use effective planning to help all pupils learn well.
- Clear learning tasks are planned that challenge all pupils, sustain their interest and enable productive use of lesson time.
- Regular opportunities are planned for children to apply key skills in reading, writing and maths across the curriculum.

### **Teaching**

- The learning objective is always shared with the children, and explained in words children understand.
- Children understand the purpose of their learning and are encouraged to make connections between their learning in different lessons or areas of the curriculum.
- Task instructions and context are separated from the learning objective.
- Learning objectives are focussed, manageable and accessible.
- There are clear success criteria, which are discussed and agreed between the children and their teacher.
- Learning objectives and success criteria are visually displayed / referred to at some point in the lesson.
- Appropriate strategies, including models and scaffolds, are used to enable children to achieve the learning in the lesson.
- Teachers have consistently high expectations of children's attitudes to learning. This is reflected in pupils' participation, effort and presentation (long date in English; short date in other; sheets stuck in to ensure chronological progression; dates and titles underlined; titles referring to learning objectives).
- The learning environment aids learning by celebrating achievement, and providing prompts, models and exemplifications for children's work.

### **Assessment and feedback**

- Teachers use questioning skilfully to probe pupils' responses and they reshape tasks and explanations so that pupils better understand new concepts.
- Teachers tackle misconceptions and build on pupils' strengths.
- Teachers check pupils' understanding in lessons, offering directed and timely support.
- Teachers give sufficient time for pupils to review what they are learning in a lesson and to develop further.
- Pupils are given feedback for their learning against the learning objective.
- Pupils use this feedback well and they know what to do to improve.

## PLANNING

Our planning ensures effective, efficient and creative delivery of the National Curriculum 2014 for children in Y1-Y6 and the Development Matters statements and Early Learning Goals for Foundation Stage. It also ensures coverage of PSHCE in line with the Cambridgeshire units of work and religious Education in line with the Cambridgeshire Agreed Syllabus.

Teachers plan closely together to ensure that the quality of lessons is consistently high. To make good use of time, not only for class teachers, but also for monitoring purposes, planning is clearly labelled and saved onto the server.

### Long-term planning

- Curriculum coverage

Each year group has its own outline of the objectives to be covered in that year. This is saved onto the server in Documents > Curriculum and is also available on the school website. This document ensures that knowledge, skills and concepts are developed systematically from year to year.

- Curriculum framework for the year and topic webs

Teachers work in year group partnerships to produce a curriculum framework for the year. Each term a topic web is produced to give an overview of the term, which is shared with parents.

These documents ensure:

- best use is made of links between subjects;
- effective links enable children to apply the knowledge and skills learnt in one subject to others;
- there is a greater coherence to learning by the bringing together of complementary aspects of subjects in a thematic approach;
- links between subjects are relevant and not contrived.

It is recognised that some aspects of the National Curriculum, RE syllabus and PSHCE programme have to be taught outside the linked topic web approach.

### Termly planning

Our termly plans lay out the objectives and key skills to be taught for each unit of work. Teachers also plan out each week in advance to ensure coverage and progression.

Planning does not necessarily follow the same format across the school, but has the purpose of ensuring effective teaching.

Effective teaching:

- has clear learning objectives;
- recognises the range of needs and abilities within the class;
- takes account of a range of teaching styles which reflect children's different learning styles;
- takes account of previous learning;
- plans in assessment activities;
- plans in feedback on learning
- focuses on what is to be learnt
- establishes clear success criteria, directly related to the learning intention

Teachers will differentiate the curriculum by:

- task

- resources
- outcome
- adult support

What follows, are the appendices, which contain best practice ideas and information gathered, to share and support teachers further.

## **Appendix 1: SHARING LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SUCCESS CRITERIA**

The sharing of learning objectives or intentions is seen as a crucial element in the process of teaching and learning. By sharing the objective, we empower children to take ownership of their learning.

We ensure:

- the learning objectives of a lesson are clear, and explained in words children understand;
- children understand the purpose of their learning ('The Big Picture') and are encouraged to make connections between their learning in different lessons or areas of the curriculum;
- task instructions are clearly separated from the learning objective;
- there are clear success criteria, which are discussed and agreed between the children and their teacher;
- learning objectives and success criteria are visually displayed and referred to, except in those lessons where they are to be 'discovered';
- learning objectives provide the focus for the teacher to evaluate to what extent the lesson met its aims.

**Learning objectives** often begin with:

To know (knowledge: factual information)  
To be able to (skills: using knowledge and resources)  
To understand (concepts: understanding reasons, causes and effects, how things work)  
To be aware of (attitude: empathy, awareness of issues)  
I can... (affirmative statements of applied knowledge and skills)

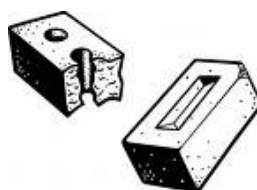
The purpose of the **success criteria** is to enable teachers and children to be sure about how to judge whether or not the learning objectives have been met. If the learning objective is seen as the 'house', then the success criteria are the 'bricks' used to build the house.

Success criteria are often phrased:

- 'What I am looking for is ....' (WILF)
- 'How will I know you have....'
- 'What will I see....'
- 'I will know you have been successful if....'
- 'Remember to....'
- 'Top tips....'
- 'To be an expert...'

Success criteria are shared, discussed and agreed with pupils. They are appropriately differentiated to ensure all pupils can make progress towards the learning objective. Success criteria are used as a basis for the evaluation of the lesson by the teacher and children. This forms part of key questioning and plenaries.

To ensure we have a shared language across the school for the learning objective and success criteria, symbols such as the 'house' symbol are used to denote the learning objective and the 'building bricks' symbol to denote the success criteria.



These symbols are displayed in the classroom or on the Smartboard as appropriate.



## **Appendix 2: EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING**

We recognise that skilful and well-planned questions are crucial to effective teaching, learning and assessment. Our questions focus children's thinking on the key points. Teachers and other adults model good questioning to help and encourage children to ask their own questions and to further or clarify their learning. Effective questions can help to move children from the concrete and factual towards the analytical and evaluative. Teachers make skilful use of assessment for learning in their questioning, ensuring the careful match of question to pupil in order to maximise the learning taking place. Teachers are expected to employ a variety of ways to select pupils to answer their question, not merely 'hands up'.

Questions can help children to:

- consolidate their learning;
- explore ideas further;
- make connections;
- create new understandings;
- make links to the 'big picture';
- reflect on their learning
- think.

There are two main types of questions:

- closed questions: these imply that the teacher has a predetermined 'correct' answer in mind, and are a useful means of making on the spot assessments;
- open questions: allow for a range of answers and can encourage children to think beyond the literal e.g. 'why?' and 'how?'.

Other types of questions that are effective in providing assessment opportunities are:

- How can we be sure that...?
- What is the same and what is different about...?
- How do you know...?
- How would you explain ...?
- What does this tell you about...?
- Why is...true?

It is important that we support children in responding to questions:

- allowing 'Wait-time' after each question ensures children have time to think through their response;
- giving children the opportunity to discuss their ideas briefly with another child ('talk partners') can help them to rehearse their responses, and to feel more confident and prepared; we encourage children to 'think, pair, share';
- by teachers using a range of signs or signals to gather children's responses;
- by encouraging children to provide evidence for their views or opinions.

Children are taught how to respond to other children's replies sensitively in order to build consensus or to expose a range of opinions or possible viewpoints.

Effective questions are those that:

- start with a narrow focus and broaden out; recall first, then encourage fresh thinking; (or)
- start with a broad focus and narrow down to detail;
- signal that participation is valued;

- stimulate and sustain continuing interest in a topic;
- help children externalise and 'rehearse' their knowledge by putting it into words.

Errors to be avoided include:

- asking a question, and answering it yourself before the children have a chance to think;
- asking too many questions, or asking them too quickly;
- asking questions of only the keenest or brightest children;
- continually asking the same type of questions;
- asking in a way that intimidates;
- failing to deal with an answer sensitively.

### **Appendix 3: ASSESSMENT**

Assessment can take many forms and can be used for different purposes. It is embedded in teaching and learning and is seen as an essential part of this. We recognise that effective assessment for learning happens all the time in the classroom and involves:

- promoting trusting relationships;
- valuing attitudes to learning;
- encouraging and building self-esteem;
- sharing learning objectives or intentions with children;
- helping children know and recognise the standards they are at now, those they are aiming for and how to get there;
- providing feedback that helps children to identify how to improve; recognising their next steps and how to take them;
- believing that every child can improve in comparison with previous achievement;
- both teachers and children reviewing and reflecting on performance and progress;
- children learning self-assessment techniques to discover areas they need to improve.

We recognise that there are three linked aspects of assessment that should be consistently applied across curriculum areas and phases.

#### **Formative assessment**

- Provides a wide range of evidence of learning in specific contexts which shapes immediate next steps.
- Children understand what they are learning because the learning objectives are made explicit and shared with them.
- Learning outcomes and success criteria are also made explicit so that the children know not only what they are intended to learn but also how they will demonstrate their achievement.
- Teachers plan opportunities to revisit the learning objectives during the course of the lesson through targeted questioning and mini-plenaries which provide children with opportunities to reflect on their own learning and progress.
- Peer assessment is used to support pupils to become independent learners who are able to assess and evaluate their own learning.
- Children are engaged in their learning and receive feedback on their progress. Time is built in for children to reflect on the feedback, act on any advice and ask questions for clarification.
- Teachers are constantly making judgements about their pupils' learning, whether they are marking work, responding to questions in class or evaluating pupils' prior learning at the beginning of a topic or lesson. Teachers then use this assessment information to tailor their teaching to the needs of their pupils.

### Summative assessment

- A broader view of progress is provided across a subject for the teacher and learner using unit tests, end of term tests and weekly assessments. By reviewing a range of a pupil's work, teachers assess whether a child has consolidated what they have been taught and are able to apply their learning with a degree of independence.
- Our planned steps towards the end of year objectives help teachers to plan and assess how children are progressing towards end of year expectations.
- At the end of each term, teachers grade each strand within the National Curriculum for that year group as emerging, developing, secure or mastery (greater depth).
- Where there are areas of underperformance in particular assessment area, teachers consider their most appropriate course of action, depending on whether a weakness applies to just one pupil, to a group of pupils or to a larger number of pupils. Reviews to planning are made as necessary.

### Transitional assessment

- Children receive formal recognition of their achievements
- Achievement is reported to parents/carers and the next teacher(s)
- External tests or tasks may be used

## **Appendix 4: MARKING AND FEEDBACK STRATEGIES**

Our main aim when marking and providing feedback to children is to help to close the learning gap and move children forward in their understanding.

The following strategies are used for marking and feedback:

- Oral feedback, especially with younger children, but also with older children;
- Written comments on children's work, focusing on the learning objective (what the child has done, how work can be improved or the next step). In KS1 these written comments mostly reflect the oral comments already shared with the child. Children may not be able to read the comments for themselves
- Feedback is given that supports, motivates and builds confidence, as well as enabling children to improve;
- Feedback is given throughout the course of a lesson and during the plenary, particularly linked to the learning objective. The plenary is often used for whole class feedback. Guided sessions are used mainly for group or individual feedback;
- In Key Stage 2 time is built in for children to read/act upon any oral/written comments given. Children are encouraged to respond to and initial a comment to show they have read it;
- Children are given success criteria for a piece of work and encouraged to judge for themselves whether the criteria has been met;
- Children's work is used to demonstrate a learning point;
- Symbols are used to show effort or achievement of a learning objective e.g. smiley faces, ticks and stars;
- Response partners or 'talk partners' are used to give feedback (what partner has done well, 'top tips' for improvement). This is used across the curriculum but is particularly useful in subjects where a written comment is less appropriate, such as PE or DT. This peer feedback can sometimes take the form of cross-cohort;
- Feedback is given by teaching assistants;
- Quality examples of children's work are displayed;
- Self-assessment/peer assessment strategies are used such as checklists based on success criteria;
- Feedback is given to challenge, extend or clarify thinking or to suggest a new approach.

We begin the process of developing these strategies with children in Key stage 1 and develop them throughout key stage 1 and 2, taking in to account the age and maturity of the children.

Information gained from marking and feedback is used to set targets and adjust future teaching plans if necessary.

### Marking and Feedback Strategies used at Foundation Stage

In the Foundation Stage our assessment strategies are based upon observation of all aspects of the children's learning. This is mainly carried out through play situations in child initiated as well as teacher led activities.

- Instant oral feedback is given while children are playing as well as at the end of a session.
- Children's work is shared to demonstrate a learning point or to give praise.
- Written comments and smiley faces may be given with the child when a piece of written work is finished.
- Much of the children's work is displayed to celebrate achievement.

### Examples of effective comments used when providing feedback

We ensure our comments:

- link to the learning objective, include what the child has done well and what could be improved e.g. I like the way you have...  
Well done for...  
You have understood....  
Remember to...  
Next time...  
Target:  
Top Tip:
- sometimes provide a question to further children's understanding of the learning objective;
- encourage children to self-evaluate e.g. What have you learnt?
- include symbols, stamps, faces with different expressions e.g. smiley or sad;
- give examples of what we mean e.g. Remember to use powerful verbs like ...

### 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 success criteria. They are guided within plenary sessions to evaluate their progress towards a learning objective using the success criteria.

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?
- Am I proud of my work?

The following strategies are used for peer and self-assessment:

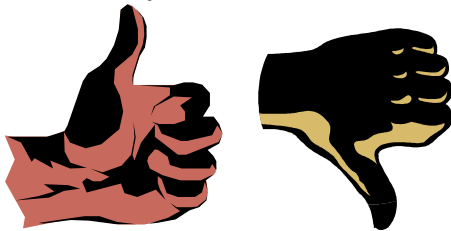
- **Traffic Lights**
  - Red – I don't understand
  - Amber/Orange – I'm nearly there
  - Green – I understand



Children indicate their understanding with a coloured dot on their work.

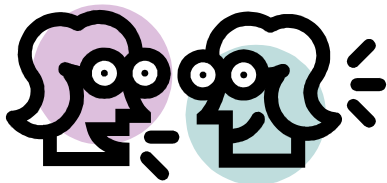
on their

- **Thumbs up / Thumbs down**



This is used at any point during a lesson to ascertain understanding or feelings.

- **Talk/Response Partners**



Children share with a partner:

- 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

Teachers model what effective peer and self-assessment techniques look like, enabling children to develop their own skills effectively.

This document can be located in Staff Share >Documents >School Policies >Teaching Learning and Assessment Policy >TLA Policy 2017