



Learning and Teaching Policy

Spring Term 2017

Review Date – Spring Term 2019

Introduction

At Southerny Academy we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the idea that both adults and children learn new things every day. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone. Through our teaching we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives.

Aims and objectives

We aim to provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows all children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential, irrespective of socio-economic background, ethnicity, gender or creed.

Through our teaching we aim to:

- enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring, independent and reflective learners;
- foster children's self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with other people;
- develop children's self-respect and encourage children to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others;
- show respect for all cultures and, in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people;
- enable children to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this community;
- enable children to grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens.

Effective teaching and learning

Personalised learning is at the heart of effective teaching and learning. At Southery, we recognise the need to develop strategies that will allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them so that they may fulfil their potential.

Many learning opportunities are made available to the children that take account of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning styles.

Such opportunities include:

- investigation and problem solving;
- research and finding out;
- group work;
- paired work;
- independent work;
- whole-class work;
- asking and answering questions;
- use of ICT;
- a range of experiences - fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest;
- visitors
- creative activities;
- debates, role-plays and oral presentations;
- designing and making things;
- participation in athletic or physical activity
- outside classroom/environment

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.

Effective teaching and learning is characterised by the following:

- High quality teaching and learning
- Target setting and tracking
- Focused assessment
- Intervention
- Pupil grouping
- The learning environment
- Curriculum organisation
- The extended curriculum
- Supporting children's wider needs

1. 'Quality first' teaching and learning

This is characterised by:

Highly focused lesson plan with clear objectives which are shared with the children

High expectations of pupil involvement and engagement with their learning

High levels of interaction for all pupils

Teacher questioning, modelling and explaining

An emphasis on learning through dialogue, with regular opportunities for pupils to talk individually and in groups

An expectation that pupils will accept responsibility for their own learning and work independently

Praise and encouragement to further motivate pupils.

Child initiated learning

2. Target setting and tracking

Individual pupils' progress is tracked, together with that of cohorts and specific groups throughout the school. We use a range of performance measures including teacher assessment and test results. Strengths and areas for development are identified to inform planning and to implement intervention programmes as appropriate. Data is collected on a half-termly and is shared with the staff and pupils and parents.

Pupil progress meetings are held half-termly to identify strengths/weaknesses in performance and/or identify CPD requirements.

Parents/carers receive regular updates on their child's progress so that they can provide support/encouragement as appropriate.

Senior curriculum leaders monitor pupil progress through regular lesson observations, pupil interviews, book and planning scrutiny within the constraints a small school has.

3. Focused assessment

Secure knowledge of each pupil's current progress is a core element of teaching and learning at Southery. Lesson planning is based on prior learning and throughout the learning process, active assessment is required to enable the expected rate of progress to be made.

Fundamental to our formative assessment procedures is Assessment for Learning (AfL).

A range of AfL strategies are used in the classroom:-

Learning objectives are made explicit and shared with the pupils through our learning ladders.

Success criteria are understood by the pupils and teacher.

Self and peer assessment is used against the success criteria.

Pupils are engaged in their learning and receive immediate feedback on their progress.

Summative assessment opportunities are detailed in the assessment calendar. These include optional tests from external providers and end of Key Stage tests. Continuous assessment is central to teaching and learning practice, including EYFS Profile.

4. Intervention

It is expected that the majority of pupils at Southery will make at least appropriate rates of progress through quality first teaching. However, for some pupils this approach may not be sufficient and these pupils, at various stages, may benefit from additional small group or 1:1 intervention programmes to enable them to make the progress required to achieve their full potential. Central to the effective planning of an intervention programme is the knowledge the teacher has of a particular pupil or groups of pupils. When considering pupils for interventions, a wide range of assessment evidence is drawn upon to support judgements made about pupil progress. This is led by the SENCO in collaboration with the class teachers.

5. Pupil Grouping

All classes are mixed age and mixed ability. In order to meet the learning objectives and learning needs and provide appropriate challenge and support for all pupils, teachers use a range of grouping options across the year group and within their classes.

- ability groups across the class and key stages when relevant.
- skills based grouping
- paired work to facilitate discussion
- individual work
- pupil choice
- whole class groups
- whole school team work

6. The Learning Environment

Our classrooms are attractive learning environments. Displays are changed regularly, to ensure that the classroom reflects the topics studied by the children. We ensure that all children have the opportunity to display their best work at some time during the year. Highly visual and interactive working walls are used to engage pupils and encourage self-help strategies.

We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by the children.

Increasingly, we are aiming to use external spaces to provide the 'outdoor classroom'.

In Foundation Stage, we provide an 'enabling environment', both indoors and outdoors. The learning environment is designed to encourage FS children to move freely between areas.

7. Curriculum Organisation

We use the National Curriculum 2014 and Development Matters to guide our teaching. These set out the aims and objectives detailing what should be taught in each year group.

In personalising the curriculum, we aim to find appropriate challenges for pupils and address their particular needs so that they may all have an equal opportunity to succeed.

We aim to cater for the needs and interests of a full range of learners including:

- the gifted and talented
- learners with learning difficulties and disabilities
- learners with English as an additional language
- girls and boys
- looked after children
- learners with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties

8. The Extended Curriculum

Helping pupils to discover and/or develop new interests is essential to learning at Southery Academy. During the school year a range of activities are organised to enhance the curriculum:-

- Residential visits
- Clubs
- Visits
- Visitors
- Sports Events
- Infant music festival

We ensure that all tasks and activities that the children do are safe. When we plan to take children out of school, we first inform parents and obtain their permission. In so doing, we follow the LA guidance on Off-Site visits and volunteers.

9. Supporting children's wider needs

At Southery, we aim to establish good relationships with all our families and to provide a climate open to dialogue. Within school, we can offer advice and support through our links to other agencies, for example:

- School nurse
- Speech and language therapy
- School Support Team

Where additional support from other agencies is required, a 'team around the child' approach may be needed. In this case we use the Family Support Plan process.

The role of governors

Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school policies on teaching and learning. In particular they:

- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by helping to allocate resources effectively
- ensure that the school buildings and premises are in good repair and aid learning.
- ensure that high quality, competent staff are appointed and that all appropriate safeguarding checks are carried out.
- monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment through link visits to the school and in consultation with subject leaders
- facilitate staff development and performance management practices that 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 principal's report to governors as well as a review of the in-service training sessions attended by our staff.

The role of the school

We will :

- Recognise each child as an individual with a unique set of talents, abilities and needs.
- Teach the skills of reading, writing and mathematics to ensure that each child has the opportunity to reach their potential.
- Educate each child in a broad range of other subjects.
- Encourage children's independence, responsibility and awareness of others.
- Through regular contact give information to the parents/carers about their child's progress.
- Listen to and discuss concerns and suggestions raised by parents/carers and children.
- Develop a spiritual and moral understanding and appreciation and respect for the beliefs of others.
- Provide a safe, secure and positive learning environment at school.

The role of Parents

We believe that parents, as their child's primary educator, have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. Parents have a responsibility to:-

- Ensure their child attends school regularly, punctually and equipped to learn.
- Ensure their child wears correct school uniform and has school P.E kit.
- Provide information to the school about daytime contact numbers,

reasons for all absences, and issues that might affect their child's work or behaviour.

- Take an active and supportive interest in their child's learning at home and in school.
- Attend parents' evenings and read and discuss with their child all school reports.
- Supervise completion of homework.
- Work with the school to encourage good behaviour of their child.
- Understand that a good night's sleep and breakfast will help their child to make the most of each day at school.
- Provide their child with healthy snacks and lunchboxes and encourage an active lifestyle.

The role of the child

We believe that the child has a responsibility to:

- Come to school happy and ready to learn and play.
- Make sure they have had an early night and enough breakfast before they come to school.
- Wear the correct school uniform.
- Chat about their day at school.
- Be a good friend to children and teachers and be polite and helpful to visitors.
- Look after books, toys, games and other equipment in our classrooms.
- Listen well.
- Eat healthily and take an active part in school sport.
- Behave in an appropriate manner.

Monitoring and review

All our teachers reflect on their strengths/areas for development and their professional development needs are planned for accordingly. We provide internal and external guidance to support our teachers in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding so that they can continually improve their practice.

We are aware of the need to review the school teaching and learning 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.

Adopted by the Principal and Governors January 2017