Lisneal College

Londonderry

School Policy Document

Curriculum

POLICY

on

Learning and Teaching

January 2016

**PRINCIPLES and PURPOSES**

1) Curriculum refers to formal and informal learning which occurs within school including those activities often referred to as extra-curricular or extended schooling.

2) The aim of this Policy for Learning and teaching is to ensure the provision of an efficiently and effectively managed and resourced curriculum which is in line with DENI Statutory Requirements and associated Guidance, offers breadth, balance. relevance, continuity and progression, prepares pupils for employment and future learning, is informed by and characterised by

* The promotion of a culture of respect, challenge, care, concern and a positive belief in the ability of all pupils
* The ethos of a ‘Can do’ approach in every aspect of the curriculum and in every classroom
* A physical learning environment that is positive and encouraging and helps all pupils to see themselves in a positive light.
* An emotional learning environment that supports all learners that instills a ‘can do ‘ approach and encouragement of self belief.
* Clear and collaborative planning
* Clearly defined learning outcomes with appropriate reference to differentiation and pupils with additional need
* Purposeful, stimulating and supportive learning opportunities to involve all pupils
* Rigorous evaluation based on the availability and effective analysis of quantitative and qualitative data at whole school and teacher level
* The provision of wide-ranging opportunities enrich the experiences of pupils
* Literacy, Numeracy and IT experiences which are relevant and meaningful, threaded throughout all subject areas.
* Strategies aimed at addressing disaffection
* The careful management of innovation
* Systematic and well-managed qualitative procedures to guide pupils when they are making curricular choices at Key Stages of formal schooling
* The analysis of linkage between good relationships within school, behaviour, achievement, attendance and teaching and learning
* The high level competence of teaching staff committed to Continuous Professional Development
* Teaching and non teaching staff who seek to develop the individual strengths and talents of every child.

**PRACTICES**

1. **The learning environment will stimulate and motivate pupils**
* The classroom itself will provide a stimulating and challenging learning environment
* Learning contexts will reflect pupils’ interests, previous experiences and future development
* Teachers will seek to motivate pupils to work with a ‘Can do’ approach and provide a caring yet challenging environment.

**2) All teachers will work, individually and collectively, to provide effective plans for all courses and programmes as well as day to day activities**

* Teaching plans will specify concisely and clearly what pupils are expected to learn
* Planning will be carried out with previous evaluation of pupil viewpoints
* Teaching plans will specify how and when learning takes place
* Learning outcomes will be clearly stated
* Assessment for Learning strategies will be clearly stated
* Assessment information will be used effectively to identify pupils’ needs, plan next steps in learning and ensure continuity and progression
* Plans will take account of national and local curriculum guidelines and school policies
* Activities, including homework, will make effective use of the pupils’ and teachers’ time
* Opportunities for planning with colleagues or outside agencies will be used
* Programmes and lessons will be planned to make appropriate use of ICT
* Overall plans will take account of pupils with Student Passports

**3) Teachers will ensure that a range of inclusive teaching strategies, appropriate to the context and the needs of pupils, is used in the delivery of lessons and programmes**

* Teaching approaches, including the use of ICT, will be well matched and tailored to pupils’ learning needs and provide a wide range of learning experiences
* Teaching approaches will maximise the opportunities available to work directly with pupils in appropriate and well-planned whole-class, group and individual situations
* Homework will be purposeful, challenging and linked to class work
* Approaches will be designed to successfully develop pupils’ independent thinking skills

**4) Interactions with pupils are positive and effective**

* Teachers will share the purposes of lessons with pupils
* Teachers’ explanations, expositions and instructions will be unambiguous and pitched at an appropriate level
* Discussions with pupils will promote learning and build confidence
* Teachers will encourage and value pupils’ contributions
* Teachers should use praise as an effective motivation for learning

**5) Questioning of pupils will be clear and purposeful**

* Questioning pupils is a vital method for developing understanding and identifying weaknesses
* Pupils’ responses will be listened to and used effectively and time given to respond.
* Teachers will take care to involve all pupils
* Questioning will aim to elicit information on more than mere recall of facts i.e. processing, reasoning, speculation, evaluation etc
* Where questioning indicates weaknesses in pupils’ knowledge and understanding, efforts will be made to ascertain where learning went wrong so that errors can be identified and remedial measures put in place

**6) The school will encourage pupils to be fully involved in their own learning**

* Teachers will encourage and give opportunity for pupils to take responsibility for, and be active in, their own learning
* Pupils will be required and helped to think for themselves and reflect on ideas, issues and experiences
* Teachers will aim to ensure that pupils have a very good understanding of what they need to do to improve

**7) Pupils will learn to work effectively with others**

* Teachers will give pupils regular opportunities to work collaboratively in a variety of circumstances
* Teachers will require pupils to work in groups, which will vary in composition and size

**8) The school will ensure that the learning needs of all pupils are effectively met**

* Tasks and activities will be differentiated and well matched to the needs of individual pupils
* Teachers will choose resources very carefully to address pupils learning needs
* Teachers will use approaches that focus on pupils achieving their next steps in learning
* Pupils will be allowed to contribute to setting their own learning targets
* Productive links will be made with other learning opportunities
* Teachers will take account of pupil’s linguistic and cultural background
* When working with individuals or groups of pupils with differing abilities or aptitudes, all will be challenged at an appropriate level through carefully judged provision
* Teachers will identify learning needs systematically
* Teachers will ensure that barriers to learning are clearly addressed
* The school will carefully identify and attend to the special needs of looked after children
* The contribution of learning support staff will be managed to maximise their contribution to meeting pupils’ needs

**9) Teachers will use methods of assessment and recording, which are well matched to clearly identified purposes**

* Teachers will use assessment to make judgements about progress towards curricular targets
* Teachers will use an appropriate range of formal and informal assessment approaches
* Teachers will use an effective means of recording and summarising assessment information
* When required, tests will be used effectively, in accordance with local and national guidance

**10) Judgements made in the course of teaching will be based on valid knowledge about individual pupils**

* Teachers will ensure that they become knowledgeable about all pupils in their charge
* Teachers will analysis and interpret relevant data to address underachievement through the identification of pupils’ learning needs and setting of learning targets
* Teachers will constantly seek to find out how individuals are dealing with key learning aims and tasks, how successful they are and what difficulties they are meeting
* The school will have appropriate arrangements to moderate and validate teachers’ judgements

**11) Teachers will use assessment information for the benefit of individual pupils and to refine future teaching and learning**

* Pupils will be informed on a regular basis about their progress and attainment and the form teacher will discuss progress 4 times a year individually with the pupil across all subjects studied.
* Subject teachers and form teachers will engage pupils in appropriate dialogue about their progress and value their views
* Teachers will be committed to the importance of identifying next steps in learning
* Summaries and record will be used to:
* Periodically inform pupils
* Provide a basis for reporting to parents
* Foster continuity of and progression in learning from stage to stage
* Teachers will make full use of assessment information to evaluate the effectiveness of learning and teaching and inform future provision and progression

**12) The school will be accountable to parents and report effectively to them about each pupil’s progress**

* The school will encourage parents to communicate on matters pertaining to their children’s progress
* Opportunities to consult with teachers will be readily available
* Formal occasions will be well organised and all arrangements communicated clearly
* Written reports to parents will be in a helpful format, which avoids undue focussing on pupils’ attitude; provide clear information and details of how each pupil is progressing; cover all aspects of the curriculum, including personal and social development; and indicate the next stages in each pupil’s learning
* Parents are encouraged to respond to these reports
* Parents’ views and enquiries about their child’s attainment and progress will considered promptly and carefully
* The school will provide an effective response to such views and enquiries and facilitate feedback

**13)The school will foster meaningful contacts with the wider**

 **community**

* The school will liaise and co-operate with relevant bodies at a local level to ensure that the curriculum (teaching and learning) of the school is relevant to, informs and is informed by the needs of the wider community and the pupils drawn from the same.

It is anticipated that the principles and values will apply in all learning situations associated with school life this to include activities referred to as extra-curricular and/ or extended schooling

*S Wilson ( VP)Jan 2016 to be reviewed Jan 2017 by SWilson*