



1. Introduction

“It turns out that as long as you go to school (and that’s important), then it doesn’t matter very much which school you go to, but it matters very much which classroom you sit in.”
(Dylan William 2011)

At Stoke Holy Cross Primary, we aim for every classroom to be the most effective learning environment it can be.

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 – Learning Together.

We adhere to the two factors with the strongest evidence of improving pupil attainment being:

- teachers’ content knowledge, including their ability to understand how students think about a subject and identify common misconceptions
- quality of instruction, which includes using strategies, like effective questioning, and the use of assessment. (Sutton Trust 2014. ‘*What makes great teaching?*’)

2. School Aims and Implementation

Stoke Holy Cross Primary School aims to provide children the opportunity to develop towards their full potential; academically, emotionally and socially:

- Providing the highest standard of education to enable children to acquire the skills, knowledge and concepts relevant to their future.
- Promoting an ethos of care, mutual respect and support, where effort is valued and success celebrated.
- Enabling children to become active, responsible and caring members of the school and wider community.

The school works towards these aims by:

- Promoting high quality learning and attainment.
- Providing a high quality learning entitlement and environment.
- Valuing each other and ourselves.
- Working in partnership with parents and the community.

3. Definition of Learning

At Stoke Holy Cross Primary 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.

4. Principles of Effective Learning

We believe that children learn best when:

- they feel happy, comfortable and safe; (5.1)
- their confidence and self-esteem are high and they enjoy positive, trusting relationships with adults and peers; (5.2)
- they are challenged, encouraged and supported by peers and adults, including family; (5.3)
- adults and older children provide good role models as learners and members of the community; (5.4)
- the learning environment is stimulating and properly resourced; (5.5)
- teaching is authoritative, purposeful, positive, well-paced, varied and stimulating; (5.6)
- they are actively engaged in the learning process; (5.7)
- all teaching takes account of their individual needs and interests. (5.8)

5. Strategies used to Promote Effective Learning

- 5.1 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;
 - 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 fairly and consistently;
 - rigorously implement equal opportunity, anti-bullying and race equality policies;
 - implement appropriate risk assessments and procedures for safeguarding;
 - 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;
- 5.2 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, class assemblies, school council etc;
 - ensure they feel valued and have a voice;
 - make use of learning/talking partners, peer assessment and collaborative working;
 - 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.

- 5.3 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;
 - offer support to families, e.g. maths cafes, e-safety meetings.
 - 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. break time buddies, house captains;
 - enable them to share achievements through displays, class assemblies etc.
 - provide a range of extra-curricular activities.
- 5.4 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;
 - give children the opportunity to experience a residential visit;
 - invite members of the outside community to share with children their knowledge and experiences as learners and community members.
- 5.5 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 levels of oxygen 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;
 - vary the learning environment, using outdoor spaces and out-of-school visits;
 - set out informative, interactive and celebratory displays.
- 5.6 To ensure that children are actively engaged in the learning process, we will:
- implement the Framework for Effective Teaching and Learning.
- 5.7 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;
 - fully implement the SEN policy and APDR plans.

- 5.8 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 support the well-being of members of staff;
 - provide a curriculum that covers, and goes beyond, the statutory requirements;
 - plan lessons that are adapted to meet the needs of individual children;
 - plan and deliver lessons and units of work that incorporate the principles of the Framework for Effective Teaching and Learning;
 - 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.

6. **Children**

To support the aims of the School through:

- attending school regularly with a positive attitude, eagerness to learn and to behave in a way that allows themselves and others to learn;
- working well independently and collaboratively; remembering what they have learnt and having the confidence to apply skills and knowledge in new contexts;
- persevering with their learning and knowing that when they find it difficult they can ask for help;
- taking pride in their work, always trying their best and aiming to get better all the time.

7. **Parents and Carers**

To support the aims of the School through:

- being understanding and supportive of our aims in learning and teaching and sign the School's Home-School Agreement;
- attending and contributing to Teacher Consultation Meetings;
- supporting their children with their homework activities including reading and helping their children improve skills in memory needed for learning through practising a concept or knowing the multiplication tables (please refer to Homework Policy);
- ensuring their children are equipped for school with the correct uniform, PE kit and book bag contents;
- praising their children for the good things that they do in school;
- communicating and working with the school whenever their child needs further social or emotional support or to develop their child's skills and understanding.

8. **Governors**

To support the aims of the School through:

- monitoring the school's systems for planning work, supporting staff and monitoring progress;
- monitoring the allocation, use and appropriateness of resources;
- monitoring how the standards of achievement are changing over time.
- visiting School and talking to children about their learning experiences;
- promoting and supporting the positive involvement of parents within the school;
- attending training and other related events;
- reporting to the governing body with recommendations, if appropriate, annually;
- working with Senior Leaders to review the School's Teaching and Learning Policy annually.

9. **What is 'Effective Teaching'?**

We believe that effective teaching is when teachers and other School staff;

- form positive relationships with the children in their class and other members of the school community;
- plan lessons effectively which take children's prior learning and current assessment into account and are appropriately pitched in order that the lessons consolidate, build upon and extend learning for all children;
- insist on high expectations of learning and social behaviours;
- ensure that effective direction and support is given in order that the children make good progress;
- demonstrate secure subject and pedagogical knowledge in order to inspire children and build their understanding;
- develop and sustain good links and focussed communication with parents/carers in order to support the children's learning;
- develop and maintain safe, secure and inspiring classroom and learning environments;
- demonstrate effective lesson organisation;
- Effectively and accurately assess and monitor children's progress in order that they can extend children's learning both within individual lessons and over time;
- use resources effectively, including other adults, to support children's learning;
- use technology effectively in order to support children's learning;
- develop the range of reading skills required to access all the curriculum effectively;
- use questioning effectively to gauge and extend children's skills, knowledge and understanding;
- are reflective regarding their professional practice and the overall provision the School offers.
- ensure that teachers and teaching assistants are equipped with the necessary skills, resources and knowledge needed in order to provide the children with the best possible learning experiences both in class and when undertaking interventions.

9.1 We believe that effective teaching is when teachers and other School staff form positive relationships with the children in their class and other members of the the school community:

- adults and children demonstrate mutual respect;
- adults and children develop a good rapport with one another;
- adults demonstrate respect and consideration for themselves and others;
- adults understand that their behaviour is a model for the children in the school and therefore ensuring that their behaviour is exemplary;
- adults work with children to establish and meet rules and targets for both learning and behaviour;
- adults demonstrate support, encouragement and praise to children and other adults and encouraging this to be reciprocal within the School community;
- adults take pride in shared and personal successes;
- adults take an active part in the life of the school by acting professionally and with sensitivity;
- adults work and communicate effectively with children, colleagues at all levels and parents/carers in order to maximise children's learning;
- adults are keen, able and confident to tell their colleagues about their school day in an honest way.

9.2. We believe that effective teaching is when teachers plan lessons which take children's prior learning and current assessment into account and are appropriately pitched in order that the lessons consolidate, build upon and extend learning for all children;

- Senior leaders develop clear and consistent structures and systems for all aspects of curriculum planning;
- Teachers and School leaders, at all levels, have an understanding of and are able to effectively utilise the complete planning process; including the use of maps to develop

long, medium and short term plans, to inform both the construction of the curriculum and its delivery;

- All planning has clear learning steps to success in language the children will understand;
- Planning identifies a range of engaging activities to develop children's skills, knowledge and understanding;
- Planning explicitly notes appropriate subject specific language;
- Planning details resources to be used which support learning, including the strategic deployment of any other adults;
- Planning shows that the teacher has been reflective and assessed the children's work, annotating this to indicate potential next steps in the children's learning which will directly move the learning on;

9.3 We believe that good teaching is when teachers (and other adults when applicable) on high expectations of learning and social behaviours;

- Senior leaders develop clear and consistent structures and systems for all members of the School community that identify expectations for both learning and social behaviours;
- Teachers and other adults maintain positive relationships with the children without underestimating the need for good behaviour;
- Lessons are well paced, interesting and match the children's learning needs so that all children are encouraged to display good learning behaviours;
- Teachers and other adults consistently but sensitively use the School's Behaviour for Learning Policy, in order that all children know what is expected of them, can learn and socialise appropriately and understand the difference between right and wrong and that there are consequences to their actions;
- Children are praised and rewarded for the good things that they do and sanctioned if they do not do the right thing.

9.4 We believe that good teaching is when teachers (and other adults when applicable) ensure that effective direction and support is given in order that the children make good progress;

- Senior leaders develop clear and consistent structures and systems for all members of the School community that identify expectations for both learning and social behaviours;
- Children are given clear consistent direction about their expected conduct both in lessons and around the School;
- Children's work is regularly assessed; verbally or in written form, clearly stating what the children have done well and what their next steps in their learning are;
- Teachers and children; and teachers and senior leaders, have regular discussions about the children's work which affect provision and support arising from this within the accountability process;
- Children and teachers use a variety of accurate, timely and regular assessment strategies in order to assess children's work in relation to the lesson's learning;
- Teachers have a secure understanding of what each child is capable of in their class and will only accept appropriate outcomes for each individual, relative to their ability and moderate work within year groups, phases and across the school in order to support accuracy and consistency;
- Teachers have a secure understanding of progression within each core subject (English, Mathematics and Science); including what skills, knowledge and understanding need to be demonstrated for a child to aim to achieve at National Standard and what the next steps for that child are in order that they make progress in their learning, or where to find this information for all curriculum subjects.

9.5 We believe that good teaching is when teachers demonstrate secure subject and pedagogical knowledge in order to inspire children and build their understanding;

- Teachers have a good knowledge of each subject that they are teaching and an understanding of progression of learning in that subject;

- Teachers engage children throughout the lesson by providing clear and concise explanations and expectations, a good balance of challenging and appropriate activities, questions and discussion points and opportunities to assess what has been learnt and develop considered accurate responses to the next steps in their study or learning;
- Teachers are instrumental in their own Professional Development; actively taking part in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) sessions both within school and elsewhere;
- Subject Leaders and other designated staff within the school, lead CPD sessions for colleagues on areas of specific need in order to support and develop staff knowledge as required;
- Staff engage in lesson visits and undertake reciprocal peer observations in order to support colleagues, further enhance their own practice and develop a learning ethos across the school.

9.6 We believe that good teaching is when teachers apply a range of teaching styles which sustain their concentration, motivation and application;

- Teachers have a clear understanding of the variety of teaching styles, which ones they instinctively use and plan to utilise the other teaching styles accordingly;
- Teachers use this knowledge in order to develop children's learning and sustain the concentration and motivation of the children in their class.

9.7 We believe that good teaching is when teachers develop and sustain good links with parents/carers in order to support the children's learning;

- Senior leaders, at all levels, teachers and other staff use informal and formal opportunities to develop positive relationships with parents/carers that enable clear, honest and relevant information to be shared which is aimed at supporting learning and the development of good learning and social behaviours;
- Teachers use the following opportunities to work towards the aim stated above;
 - i. Formal opportunities such as parents/carers consultations, annual reports and meetings organised at the request of either School or parents/carers;
 - ii. Informal opportunities such as at the beginning and end of each school day, on educational visits and through extended schools opportunities;
 - iii. Inviting parents into School so that they can share their expertise in order to support children with their learning;
 - iv. Liaising regularly with parents and carers in a variety of ways including; sending home achievement certificates, home/school communication books and Reading Records;
 - v. Parents/carers and children sign a Home/School agreement in order to establish the roles, rights and responsibilities as members of the School community.

9.8 We believe that good teaching is when teachers develop and maintain safe, secure and inspiring classroom and learning environments;

- Senior leaders, at all levels, and all staff take time to consider both the classroom and learning environments in terms of their safety and are continually looking for ways to improve them;
- The classroom and learning environments will be managed in a way that supports the development of learning; academic, social and emotional. Features of this will include:
 - i. Furniture being arranged to facilitate different types of learning; through whole class teaching, group work, one to one and also to ensure inclusion;
 - ii. High quality classroom and corridor display with good balance between the celebration of children's work and displays that develop children's learning by providing expectation and/or support;
 - iii. Topic areas, which encourage children to have an interest in books and reading, researching and investigating a broad and balanced curriculum;
 - iv. The acknowledgement by School leaders, at all levels, and all staff that communal areas within the School environment such as the playgrounds, hall and corridors contribute to the academic, social and emotional development of

children and therefore receive due consideration and are developed accordingly;

- Teachers ensure that children have the opportunity to work both within the School environment and also in alternative environments, when appropriate, during educational visits.

9.9 We believe that good teaching is when teachers demonstrate effective lesson organisation;

- Lessons are well structured to include appropriate time for an introduction, independent or collaborative tasks and for a plenary or series of mini-plenaries with ample opportunity for teacher/child interaction, in order to discuss, enhance, reflect and further develop the children's learning;
- Teachers provide clear direction to ensure children know what they are doing and how to do it including the modelling and demonstration of key elements within lessons, working with a guided focus group when appropriate using the day-to-day assessment of the children's progress.
- Teachers apply the most appropriate classroom organisation, both in terms of the physical environment and also how the children are organised, in order to match and contextualise the children's learning;
- Opportunities are available for children to engage in practical activities, investigations and problem solving;
- Teachers provide opportunities for children to practice and reinforce skills learnt and appropriate extension and challenge activities;
- Teachers use appropriate resources, including the use of ICT to support and extend children's learning;
- Resources are clearly labelled, the children can access them and use them with increasing independence;
- Teaching Assistants are well deployed, optimising all learning opportunities and throughout their conduct in school set high expectations of themselves and the children.

9.10 We believe that good teaching is when teachers effectively assess and monitor children's progress in order that they can affect children's learning both within individual lessons and over time;

- Senior leaders, at all levels, and all teachers maximise the opportunities to impact on children's learning through self-evaluation structures and on-going classroom assessment and feedback. This will involve senior leaders, at all levels, and teachers engaging in the following activities and affecting practice accordingly;
 - i. The analysis of statutory assessment data to evaluate individual, group and cohort standards and achievement;
 - ii. The regular assessment and tracking of children's standards and achievement in Reading, Writing and Mathematics in years 1-6 in relation to individual targets set;
 - iii. The regular evaluation of progress shown by all children in years 1-6 (in the areas noted above) through discussion between senior leaders;
 - iv. The regular monitoring of progress in Foundation Stage, establishing provision targets for individual, group and cohorts of children against assessment criteria within the Foundation Stage Profile;
 - v. Class teachers regularly assessing children's understanding and progress both within lessons, at the end of lessons and over time in order to quickly recognise children's barriers to learning and moving swiftly to overcome them and using these assessments to inform the next stage of learning and the planning process;
 - vi. Teachers providing encouragement, praise and rewards for the effort, outcomes and progress children make;
 - vii. Teachers use diagnostic feedback to children; either verbally or in written form, which can be used by the child to improve their learning with the child becoming increasingly active within this process;

- viii. Children becoming increasingly involved in assessing their own and others learning and taking appropriate actions to develop this e.g. self-assessment against the lessons learning steps to success.
- ix. Teachers liaising with the School's SENDCO in the formulation and implementation of any intervention programme including children's Assess, Plan, Do, Review record (APDR) and evaluating the impact of these on the children's learning.

9.11 We believe that good teaching is when teachers use resources effectively, including other adults, to support children's learning;

- Subject leaders ensure that specialist resources are stored, maintained and audited in designated areas;
- Children are taught how to use resources correctly and safely and also to respect and maintain equipment;
- Resources used are appropriate to the task and age of children in supporting and engaging them with their learning;
- Other adults are deployed effectively to work with individual children or small groups of children both within the classroom and in intervention activities to maximise learning opportunities.

9.12 We believe that good teaching is when teachers use technology effectively in order to support children's learning;

- Senior leaders, at all levels, and teachers use the School's electronic assessment system to record and monitor children's progress against the targets set at the beginning of the year and affect provision accordingly;
- Teachers increasingly use a wide range of technology to support, enhance and engage children in their learning and encourage and support children to use these resources increasingly independently.

9.13 We believe that good teaching is when teachers use questioning effectively to gauge and extend children's skills, knowledge and understanding;

- Teachers ask a range of questions (comprehension, knowledge, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation) to children in order to check understanding and move their learning forward; and increasingly expect the children to ask such questions themselves using the appropriate language.

9.14 We believe that good teaching is when teachers are reflective regarding their professional practice and the overall provision the School offers.

- Senior leaders, at all levels, and all staff are aware of the need to be both reflective and proactive in developing both the School and themselves in order to develop and sustain effective provision and practice. This is exemplified through effective and robust School systems and structures within the accountability process including:
 - a. School self-evaluation practices;
 - b. The Performance Management Cycle;
 - c. Bespoke whole, group or individual staff CPD
 - d. The School's meetings cycle; including Governors, Senior Leaders, teaching staff, phase group, and teaching assistants.
 - e. Informal support from colleagues at a variety of levels.

10. **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.

11. When the policy is successful, we will see teachers and teaching assistants who:

- are knowledgeable, skilled, confident, motivated and happy in their work;
- have shared values and are supportive of each other.

11. 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;
- are quietly confident in the school.

12. **Review**

The policy has been agreed by Staff and Governors and will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is in line with current practice.