



Ardstraw Jubilee P.S.

Teaching and Learning Policy

At Ardstraw Jubilee Primary School we strive to provide a happy, caring, supportive environment where our children are nurtured to enable them to reach their full potential.

Our focus is the whole child. We aim to develop children who are confident, creative, independent and co-operative learners; who approach challenges with openness, enthusiasm and a willingness to solve problems. We encourage children to have respect for individual differences, to become active contributors to society and life-long learners.

We welcome the active involvement of parents and the local community in our school.

This policy aims to ensure that the pupils at our school are provided with high - quality learning experiences that lead to a consistently high level of pupil achievement.

Aims and Objectives:

- To provide a broad, balanced, differentiated curriculum based on the key principles of the Northern Ireland Revised Curriculum.
- To provide a well-organised, happy, positive and stimulating environment.
- To plan interesting tasks and activities which meet the needs of the children, which challenge them and which allow them to become independent, life-long learners.
- To enable our pupils to become involved in the learning process; to become increasingly responsible for their own learning and for their progress.
- To develop in our pupils the qualities of perseverance, resilience, independence and co-operation.
- To use a range of strategies and approaches which take account of the children's interests and their different learning styles.

Effective Learning:

Effective learning stems from high expectations.

Pupils have a vital role to play in their own learning. We expect that our pupils will:

- Follow agreed classroom rules, rewards and sanctions
- Be ready and willing to participate in all activities
- Take responsibility for their own work
- Stay on task
- Feel comfortable and confident about asking for help
- Complete homework on time
- Help others

All teaching staff are also learners and should be striving to continuously evaluate and improve their practice and to be open to new practices and initiatives.

Effective Teaching:

Effective learning comes about from effective teaching.

As teachers in Ardstraw Jubilee we aim to:

- Create a safe, supportive and purposeful environment for learning
- Use praise and positive reinforcement to motivate and build confidence and self-esteem
- Involve the children in planning and organising their own work
- Plan and teach activities which take account of different learning styles, abilities and interests to ensure that the individual needs of all our pupils are met
- Plan lessons which have clear learning intentions which are shared with the children
- Use a range of teaching styles and ensure there is a balance of individual, group/paired and whole class tasks
- Encourage our pupils to ask questions, take risks and ask for support when required
- Use a wide range of resources, including technology, to enhance teaching and learning
- Include a good mix of practical, investigative and problem solving activities balanced with the practice and consolidation of fundamental skills
- Use marking and assessment procedures as an aid to planning, preparing and choosing the appropriate strategies for future teaching
- Celebrate achievement

Teaching and Learning Strategies:

At Ardstraw Jubilee P.S. we acknowledge that we learn in different ways, therefore when planning lessons and activities we aim to ensure we cater for a range of learning styles.

Strategies used include -

Whole class work	Group work
Paired work	Independent work
Self and Peer review	Use of ICT
Investigations	Problem Solving
Research	Creative activities
Physical activity	Discussions/debates
Presentations	Role plays/drama
Designing/making	Educational trips/visitors
Sharing learning intentions and developing Success Criteria	
Open ended and challenging questions	
Plenary/reflection on what has been learned	

Planning:

Each teacher has a minimum of 2 non-contact sessions a week for preparation and planning.

Our half term planners clearly identify intended Learning Outcomes and place an emphasis on suggested Success Criteria which help the children to achieve these outcomes. They also contain information about the activities/tasks to be set, resources needed and differentiation (All, Most, Some groups). Plans are evaluated regularly so that teachers can modify teaching, as required, and inform future planning.

Half term planners are monitored by subject co-ordinators using an agreed format with written and oral feedback to teachers and the Principal. These planners are made available to all teaching staff on the school IT system. Teachers use their own preferred format for daily plans.

Homework:

This is linked to work which is ongoing in class and reflects the learning taking place or consolidates prior learning. It is intended to be relevant and appropriate to the pupils' needs.

The Learning Environment:

We aim to make our school an interesting, stimulating and happy learning environment for our children and staff.

Rules and Routines throughout the school help contribute to a healthy learning environment. Rules are agreed with the children. They are fair and consistently applied and are both positive and realistic. We have adopted Jenny Mosley's 'Golden Rules' throughout the school - see Behaviour Policy. We also implement the PATHS programme (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) which teaches children strategies to deal with feelings and conflict resolution.

Resources

All materials/resources should be well organised, of good quality, clean, tidy, well-labelled and accessible. Stocks are checked regularly and replenished as required. Our children are taught that resources are finite and that we all have a duty to care for resources/equipment and not to misuse, damage or waste them.

Displays

Displays, both in classrooms and throughout the school, are used to support pupils' learning, to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment, to celebrate achievement and effort and to reflect work across the curriculum. Displays should be changed regularly.

Children are encouraged to take care in the presentation of their work and any work displayed should be of a high quality.

Achievement

At Ardstraw Jubilee P.S. we celebrate achievement in many different ways - in displays of work, positive comments, weekly Superstar, verbal or written praise, opportunities to share work etc. Each class has a reward system which reinforces our school rules and expectations.

Special Educational Needs Pupils:

We base our teaching on our knowledge of the children's level of attainment with our focus being to further develop the knowledge and skills of the children. We strive to set tasks that are appropriate to each child's level of ability. When planning work for our children with special educational needs we give due regard to information and targets contained within the children's Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

We have high expectations of all pupils and believe that their work should be of a high quality. We also believe that all our pupils should be included in the full range of educational opportunities we offer.

We set targets for the whole school and for individual pupils in Literacy and Numeracy, using the results of standardised tests each May. These targets are agreed with all teachers. Whole school targets are based on areas highlighted for improvement following analysis of tests.

Targets are also set for individual underachieving pupils in each class (Years 3 - 7) who are identified through a direct comparison between their NRIT IQ and PIE/PIM scores.

All children, with support from their class teacher, set personal targets for improvement regularly and work towards these in their Target/Rocket books and class work.

Assessing, monitoring and reviewing Pupil performance:

Assessment is an integral part of our planning, learning and teaching. Teachers employ a range of assessment strategies including observations, discussions with pupils, marking and written tests. Regular staff meetings are held to monitor the progress of targeted children and SEN pupils.

The children's work is marked regularly and highlights strengths and areas for improvement/development. Marking is linked to learning intentions and success criteria and the children have a clear sense of what is expected.

Children are encouraged to reflect on their current performance and what they need to do next to improve. They are given time to make improvements to their work. Encouragement is given to promote improvement and praise is used regularly to encourage and to recognise progress.

Teachers encourage self-assessment and peer assessment strategies thus enabling the children to become more responsible for their own learning.

Summative assessments are carried out annually and the pupil data is used to identify progress or underachievement.

Staff Professional Development:

Our staff work as a team, sharing good practice and supporting each other. All staff are encouraged to attend courses relevant to their areas of responsibility as well as for their own development needs and/or interests. Staff will regularly review their own practice and performance against this Teaching and Learning Policy and any other targets set as part of the PRSD process.

The co-ordination of curriculum subjects is divided between the teaching staff.

Co-ordinators are responsible for -

- Keeping up-to-date with the requirements and best practice of their subject area.
- Monitoring teaching and pupil progress in line with the monitoring and evaluating procedures in their subject and preparing reports for the Principal and Governors, as required.
- Preparing and evaluating Action Plans (when necessary) for their subject in line with the School Development Plan.
- Liaising with other teachers to ensure continuity and progression in their subject.
- Attending relevant courses and disseminating information to staff.
- Maintaining their subject's resources.

The Role of Parents:

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping their children to learn.

We work hard to keep parents informed of their children's progress and to support them in how they can help their children -

for example: through weekly Newsletters, sending out information on key school policies, holding curriculum workshops, encouraging parents to support their children with homework, invitations to attend special assemblies, celebrations, fundraisers, concerts, sports days etc., participation in our PTFA, annual Parent/Teacher meetings, annual written reports, for parents of SEN pupils meetings to discuss IEPs, additional support through Numeracy Support packs.

We have an open door policy whereby parents may arrange a suitable time to discuss any concerns regarding their child.

Some parents also offer some of their time to help out in school undertaking a range of tasks to support staff. These offers are always welcome. All helpers are subject to vetting procedures.

We would like parents to -

promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general, ensure that their child has the best attendance possible and keep the school informed if there are any matters outside of school which may affect their child's performance or behaviour.

Monitoring and Evaluating:

All staff, led by the Principal, are responsible for monitoring and evaluating Teaching and Learning within our school. A range of procedures are used to monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil achievement.

The information gathered is used to inform and influence future developments and is closely linked to the School Development Plan and associated Action Plans.

The Board of Governors play an active role in the life of the school. They support the learning and teaching taking place in our school by monitoring and reviewing school policies and by supporting the use of appropriate teaching methods. The Principal will keep Governors updated on curriculum progress and pupil achievement at each Board of Governor meeting through an oral report.