

Mill Lane Primary School



Teaching and Learning Policy

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AIMS AND RATIONALE

We Believe that Excellent Learning takes place in Excellent lessons

At Mill Lane Primary School, we believe that all children have the right to make the best progress they possibly can. We endeavour to make learning possible throughout all aspects of school life. However, we believe that the highest rate of progress takes place during lessons taught by our skilled staff team in any of the environments in which lessons can take place.

In planning, preparing, teaching and assessing lessons; our teaching staff ensure that they meet the demands of the Teachers Standards (DfE - 2013) (see appendix).

By constantly aiming to provide excellent learning through excellent standards of teaching, we aim to ensure that during inspection, OFSTED would find lessons in Mill Lane are "Good" or better as defined in their schedule for Teaching and Learning (OFSTED - 2015) (see appendix).

In 2016, all staff involved in ensuring excellent learning opportunities at Mill Lane Primary School identified the following key factors which can be seen in excellent lessons at our school:

In excellent lessons, Teachers:

- Form positive and appropriate relationships with pupils and other adults
- Demonstrate high expectations of behaviour and quality of work
- Ensure excellent progress for all pupils through a range of strategies which differentiate for individuals, groups and the whole class, such as: effective questioning, catering for different learning styles, providing adapted learning resources for SEND pupils
- Are excellent role models of behaviour and school values
- Ensure there is effective planning based on excellent subject knowledge which communicates clear learning objectives to their pupils
- Promote and encourage independence and appropriate risk-taking in response to the tasks set
- Are enthusiastic, approachable, happy and caring
- Assess in an appropriate way and at the appropriate time to ensure they acknowledge excellent work and make the next steps in learning clear
- Apply the principles of Assertive Discipline ensuring that they are clear about behaviour expectations and apply rewards and sanctions fairly
- Are genuinely reflective about their impact on pupil's progress

In excellent lessons, Teaching Assistants:

- Form positive and appropriate relationships with pupils and other adults
- Demonstrate high expectations of behaviour and quality of work
- Are excellent role models of behaviour and school values
- Are enthusiastic, approachable, happy and caring
- Apply the principles of Assertive Discipline in line with the expectations of the class teacher ensuring that they apply rewards and sanctions fairly
- Are able to use their initiative within a supportive environment
- Are able to support groups and individuals in the current setting
- Are effectively deployed to ensure excellent progress of pupils
- Are fully equipped to perform their role
- Support the class teacher in promoting and encouraging independence and appropriate risk-taking in response to the tasks set

In excellent lessons, the learning environment is:

- Safe for learning to take place in line with the school's Health and Safety procedures
- Organised, well maintained and comfortable so that it is conducive to supporting the class teacher in promoting and encouraging independence and appropriate risk-taking in response to the tasks set
- Routine based, so that children know that expectations for learning, behaviour and resourcing are consistent and manageable
- Clearly a happy and engaging place to be. The atmosphere in the room is calm but purposeful
- Enhanced by displays for various purposes including: working walls, ensuring equal opportunities, supporting the teacher or pupils in teaching and learning, encouraging excellent behaviour, encouraging independence, encouraging the demonstration of values espoused by the class teacher and school

In excellent lessons, the learners are:

- Happy and confident so that they can become independent and feel more confident in appropriate risk-taking in response to the tasks set
- Engaged, on-task and clearly able and willing to persevere with an appropriately challenging task
- Encouraged to collaborate with their peers in tasks such as group work, peer learning or peer assessment with growing success as they mature
- Actively reflective so that they can respond to feedback from adults or peers appropriately and with awareness of the next step in their learning
- Curious and inquisitive to know more and keen to ask appropriate questions to move their learning to the next level
- Able to transfer skills learnt in one task or subject area to another
- Clearly demonstrating the school's value system in their interactions with adults, peers and property

In excellent lessons, the learner's finished product:

- Clearly demonstrates the understanding of the learner
- Shows excellent progression over time
- Is of high quality, consistently demonstrating pride in their work
- Reflects the high expectations of the class teacher
- May take varied forms but is always an appropriate response to the task/challenge/provocation set by the Class Teacher
- Has been acknowledged or quality marked by the class teachers

NON-NEGOTIABLE ELEMENTS OF EXCELLENT CLASSROOM PRACTICE

The adults will promote fun and appropriate risk taking through positivity and the formation of excellent relationships through a friendly and caring approach to the children and each other. They will be seen to be actively involved with the learning throughout the lesson.

Clear lesson objectives shared with the children appropriately to be centred around what will be learned and how new skills/knowledge will be demonstrated.

Lessons will not be interrupted by ingoing or outgoing unless in emergency.

The learning environment has clearly stated rules with rewards and sanctions to enable excellent behaviour for learning.

Clear, appropriate feedback will be given to the children during the lesson and through prompt marking following lessons.

Independence will be enabled through the promotion of positive peer learning, appropriate routines and excellent preparation and maintenance of resources.

ENSURING EXCELLENCE

We believe in ensuring our teaching staff aim to provide excellent learning in all lessons

MONITORING

We monitor Teaching and Learning through various means at Mill Lane Primary School including classroom observations, learning walks, pupil progress meetings and book scrutinies at Mill Lane. This process involves the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher, Senior Leaders and Subject Leaders/ Co-ordinators.

The learning conversations which take place as part of this monitoring always concentrates on the key areas highlighted on previous pages. The conversation centres around areas which are most successful and areas where improvements can be made.

In the case where practice is judged not to be excellent, the feedback from the monitoring process will concentrate on ensuring the "non-negotiable elements of excellent classroom practice" are in place within a short but realistic time-frame. Support may be put in place for the teacher if necessary.

A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR OUR CLASSROOM TEAMS

At Mill Lane Primary School, our teaching staff are provided with opportunities to constantly improve their practice. These opportunities include lesson studies, team teaching, cross cluster moderation and discussion, high quality CPD and discussions and meetings within teams to share excellent practice. Excellent teachers are encouraged to share their practice with others. They are also encouraged to experiment with new ideas and implement these ideas where they are shown to improve the progress of children in their class.

In addition, the school's appraisal cycle ensures opportunities for all staff to improve their practice through the use of pupil progress targets, CPD requirements and whole school objectives.

THE ROLE OF GOVERNORS

Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school's approach to teaching and learning. In particular, they:

- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively
- ensure that the school buildings and premises are used optimally to support teaching and learning;
- check teaching methods in the light of health and safety regulations;
- seek to ensure that our CPD and appraisal systems promote excellent teaching;
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning approaches through the school's self-review processes, which sometimes include reports from subject leaders, head teacher's report to governors, and the school's own teaching and learning report.

The school's chief administrator keeps a comprehensive record of in-service training sessions attended by staff that is available for review by governors.

Governors can also request reviews of progress within school that can centre around year groups or vulnerable groups.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS AND CARERS

We believe we have a responsibility to assist parents in helping children to do their best

We believe that parents and carers have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn and make excellent progress. In short, the more positive involvement parents have in their child's education, the greater the progress that can be made. We do all we can to inform parents and carers about what and how their children are learning:

We hold parents' evenings to explain the progress children are making in English, Maths and other areas of learning and also to advise parents on how they can assist their child's progress.

We send information to parents and carers, at the start of each term, which outlines the topics that the children will be studying during that term at school.

We send parents and carers annual reports in which we explain the progress made by each child, and indicate how the child can improve further.

We explain to parents and carers how they can support their children with homework, and suggest, for example, regular shared reading with very young children, and support for older children with their projects and investigative work.

We believe parents have a responsibility to assist school in helping children to do their best

We would like parents and carers to ensure that their child has the best possible record of attendance and punctuality

We would like parents and carers to ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and PE kit.

We would like parents and carers to do their best to keep their child healthy and fit and safe so they can attend school with an excellent attitude towards their learning.

We would like parents and carers to inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's learning or behaviour;

We would like parents to promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general.

We require parents to fulfil the requirements set out in the annual home-school agreement.

INCLUSION

*We believe **ALL** the children at Mill Lane Primary School have the right to make the best progress they possibly can.*

We are re-stating this point because we believe in it so passionately. Regardless of ability, religion, nationality, gender, race, sexual orientation or any other social grouping; we aim to provide the highest quality education for all our pupils.

All teachers understand that it is their responsibility to ensure quality teaching for ALL pupils in their care. Sometimes they may need to utilise such additional measures as; planning which has been altered for specific need, skilful use of additional adults or adapted equipment.

If teachers decide to place any children on a named intervention programme, this will be clearly detailed and reviewed using our school provision mapping tool. If the teacher believes that a child's barriers to learning may constitute a Special Educational Need they will seek to consult with our school SENCO. Teachers are expected to inform and/or consult with parents at all stages when they are making additional or adapted arrangements to help a child overcome a significant barrier to learning.

Please see any other relevant policies for extra information including "Behaviour and anti-bullying" and the "SEND offer".

POLICY REVIEW

We are aware of the need to monitor the school's teaching and learning policy and to review it regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives and research. In light of substantial changes to curriculum, available technology, assessment procedures and SEND; this possibility has been substantially rewritten in September 2016. We will review this policy every two years, or earlier if necessary.

FURTHER READING

SEND offer

All school subject policies

Assessment Policy

Marking Policy

Behaviour and anti-bullying policy

APPENDIX:

Ofsted grade descriptors

Quality of teaching in the school

These grade descriptors, accessed from the September 2014 School Inspection Handbook, describe the **quality of teaching** in the school as a whole, taking account of evidence over time. While they include some characteristics of individual lessons, **they are not designed to be used to judge individual lessons.**

The inspection handbook, published 31st July 2014, states that
“Ofsted does not favour any particular teaching style and inspectors must not give the impression that it does. School leaders and teachers should decide for themselves how best to teach, and be given the opportunity, through questioning by inspectors, to explain why they have made the decisions they have and provide evidence of the effectiveness of their choices.

When observing teaching, inspectors should be ‘looking at’ and reflecting on the effectiveness of what is being done to promote learning, not ‘looking for’ specific or particular things. Inspectors should gather robust evidence to judge and report on how well pupils acquire knowledge, learn well and engage with lessons.”

Ofsted's grade criteria state: *"These descriptors should not be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach which relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team."*

Outstanding (1)

- Much teaching over time in all key stages and most subjects is outstanding and never less than consistently good. As a result, almost all pupils currently on roll in the school, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, disadvantaged pupils and the most able, are making sustained progress that leads to outstanding achievement.
- All teachers have consistently high expectations of all pupils. They plan and teach lessons that enable pupils to learn exceptionally well across the curriculum.
- Teachers systematically and effectively check pupils' understanding throughout lessons, anticipating where they may need to intervene and doing so with notable impact on the quality of learning.
- The teaching of reading, writing, communication and mathematics is highly effective and cohesively planned and implemented across the curriculum.
- Teachers and other adults authoritatively impart knowledge to ensure that pupils are engaged in learning and generate high levels of commitment to learning across the school.
- Consistently high quality marking and constructive feedback from teachers ensure that pupils make significant and sustained gains in their learning.
- Teachers use well-judged teaching strategies, including setting appropriate homework that, together with clearly directed and timely support and intervention, match pupils' needs accurately

Good (2)

- Teaching in most subjects, including English and mathematics, is consistently good, with examples of some outstanding teaching. As a result, most pupils and groups of pupils on roll in the school, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, disadvantaged pupils and the most able, make good progress and achieve well over time.
- Teachers have high expectations. They plan and teach lessons that deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding and enable them to develop a range of skills across the curriculum.
- Teachers listen to, carefully observe and skilfully question pupils during lessons in order to reshape tasks and explanations to improve learning.
- Reading, writing, communication and mathematics are taught effectively.
- Teachers and other adults create a positive climate for learning in their lessons and pupils are interested and engaged.
- Teachers assess pupils' learning and progress regularly and accurately at all key stages, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They ensure that pupils know how well they have done and what they need to do to improve.
- Effective teaching strategies, including setting appropriate homework, and well-targeted support and intervention are matched well to most pupils' individual needs, including those most and least able, so that pupils learn well in lessons.

Relevant Areas from The Teachers Standards

Preamble

Teachers make the education of their pupils their first concern, and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills as teachers up-to-date and are self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with parents in the best interests of their pupils.

Part One: Teaching

A teacher must:

1. Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils

- establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in **mutual respect**
- set goals that stretch and challenge pupils of all backgrounds, abilities and **dispositions**
- demonstrate consistently the positive attitudes, values and behaviour which **are expected of pupils.**

2. Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils

- be accountable for pupils' attainment, progress and outcomes
- be aware of pupils' capabilities and their prior knowledge, and plan teaching **to build on these**
- guide pupils to reflect on the progress they have made and their emerging **needs**
- demonstrate **knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn and how this impacts on teaching**
- encourage pupils to take a responsible and conscientious attitude to their **own work and study.**

3. Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge

- have a secure **knowledge of the relevant subject(s) and curriculum areas, foster and maintain pupils' interest in the subject, and address misunderstandings**
- demonstrate a critical understanding of developments in the subject and **curriculum areas, and promote the value of scholarship**
- demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting **high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject**
- if teaching early reading, demonstrate a clear **understanding of systematic synthetic phonics**
- if teaching early mathematics, demonstrate a clear understanding of **appropriate teaching strategies.**

4. Plan and teach well-structured lessons

- impart knowledge and develop understanding through effective **use of lesson time**
- promote a love of learning and children's intellectual curiosity
- set homework and plan other **out-of-class activities to consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding pupils have acquired**
- reflect systematically on the **effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching**
- contribute to the design and provision of an engaging curriculum within the **relevant subject area(s).**

5. Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils

- know when and how to **differentiate appropriately, using approaches which enable pupils to be taught effectively**

have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' **ability to learn, and how best to overcome these**

demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social **and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support pupils' education at different stages of development**

have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with **special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them.**

6. Make accurate and productive use of assessment

know and understand how to assess **the relevant subject and curriculum areas, including statutory assessment requirements**

make use of formative and summative assessment to secure pupils' progress

use relevant data to monitor progress, set targets, and plan subsequent **lessons**

give **pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback.**

7. Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment

have clear rules and routines for behaviour in classrooms, **and take responsibility for promoting good and courteous behaviour both in classrooms and around the school, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy**

have high expectations of behaviour, and establish a framework for **discipline with a range of strategies, using praise, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly**

manage classes effectively, using approaches which are appropriate to **pupils' needs in order to involve and motivate them**

maintain good relationships with pupils, exercise appropriate **authority, and act decisively when necessary.**

8. Fulfil wider professional responsibilities

- make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the school
- develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how **and when to draw on advice and specialist support**
- deploy support staff effectively
- take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional **development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues**
- communicate effectively with parents with **regard to pupils' achievements and well-being.**

Part Two: Personal and professional conduct

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards **of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:**
- treating pupils with dignity, building relationships **rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position**
- having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, **in accordance with statutory provisions**
- showing tolerance of and **respect for the rights of others**
- not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule **of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs**
- ensuring that personal beliefs are not **expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.**

Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies **and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.**

Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the **statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and response.**