



Teaching & Learning Policy

Reviewed: - November 2018

Next review: - November 2020

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Mission Statement

"Let the light of Christ shine in us all."

Introduction

At St. Cuthbert's R.C. Primary School, our approach to Teaching and Learning is distinctive, for at the heart of Catholic education lays the Christian view of the human person. We recognise and acknowledge the hugely important role that adults in school play in the learning process and we also recognise our role to support parents in the education of their child. 'Parents are the "original and primary" educators of their children'. (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church*)

- We believe that God is experienced as Trinity - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This simply means that we recognise God as a God who is relational. We acknowledge that all human beings are relational and that we cannot love God without loving our neighbours and ourselves. Therefore, all learning in our school has to be rooted in positive, loving relationships.
- We believe in the Incarnation of Jesus Christ; that God chose to become fully human. This calls us to recognise the unique dignity of each individual as made on the image and likeness of God with a divine origin and eternal destiny, worthy of deep respect. Everyone in this school community is therefore of equal value, this is reflected in our approach to Teaching and Learning.
- We believe in the Catholic truth of sacramental reality. We believe that God is everywhere and that there is no distinction between the sacred and the ordinary. Because of this, we recognise God's presence among us in all areas of the curriculum and life. We celebrate this belief in worship and liturgy- and believe that all teaching and learning is sacred.

In light of these fundamental Catholic truths, we believe that children learn best when:

1. They are happy and safe.
2. They are stimulated, motivated, challenged and engaged in their learning.
3. They achieve success that is recognised and celebrated.
4. Tasks match their potential.
5. Activities are clearly understood and match the learning objective.
6. They understand the boundaries of acceptable behaviour.
7. They are in an environment where mistakes are used as opportunities for growth.
8. They receive support and encouragement from home.

9. All adults involved in the learning process recognise the significance of their role in this Catholic school.

In order to achieve this for our children we have agreed the following: -

1. To help the children to be happy, safe and secure we will:

- Encourage positive relationships.
- Value everyone's opinion.
- Ensure there are clear routines and expectations.

2. To help the children to be stimulated, motivated, challenged and engaged in their learning we will:

- Follow DRICE model in all our teaching (see appendix)
- Ensure that all our classrooms are stimulating and well organised.
- Ensure there is an appropriate pace in learning
- Encourage children to talk about their learning.
- Enable children to see the purpose of their learning.

3. To help children achieve success that is recognised and celebrated we will:

- Ensure children take responsibility for their own learning.
- Give rewards for success that is personal to them.
- Recognise that children learn in different ways and try to teach accordingly.

4. To help children undertake tasks which match their potential we will:

- Plan learning that meets the need of the individual learner.
- Use our professional judgement to assess progress.
- Set realistic but challenging targets.

5. To help children undertake activities which are clearly understood and match the learning objectives we will:

- Display and/or explain the main learning objective at the start of each lesson.
- Explain what the success criteria of the lesson is.
- Use plenary sessions to review what has been learned.

6. To help the children understand the boundaries of acceptable behaviour we will:

- Apply the school's behaviour policy consistently.
- Praise good behaviour and 'catch' children being good.
- Discuss the consequences of poor choices and their impact.

7. To help children understand they are in learning environment where mistakes are used as opportunities for growth we will:

- Praise learning behaviour, not just the child.

- Encourage self-assessment techniques and their reflection on the process
- Acknowledge the importance of our humanity - all of us make mistakes.

8. To help children receive support and encouragement from home we will:

- Encourage all parents to show an active interest in their child.
- Affirm parents in their role as parents and 'chief educators'.
- Encourage parents to visit school regularly.
- Provide different types of home learning tasks with different levels of challenge.

9. To ensure that all adults involved in the learning process recognise the significance of their role in the Catholic school we will:

- Make regular use of reflection on staff development days.
- Begin all staff meetings with prayerful reflection.
- Emphasise the distinctive nature of our school in our induction programme for all new staff.

Appendix 1

DRICE model explained

- D** - Deepen thinking
- R** - Role model learning
- I** - Impact on progress
- C** - Challenging expectations
- E** - Engaging in Learning

Deepen thinking

Using a variety of different teaching strategies and approaches (whilst taking into account the learning styles of children in the cohort) children are challenged to deepen their thinking during a lesson. They are encouraged to pursue lines of enquiry with high quality, open ended questioning and tasks which may or may not give them a definitive answer. Children are encouraged to strive beyond the basic expectations of thinking and to develop higher order thinking skills. This means they make continuous links within their learning which will broaden, apply and deepen their understanding in different contexts.

Role model learning

Within the lesson the teacher role models the expectations of the lesson through objectives, SC, behaviour, thinking skills, questioning styles, knowledge etc. which challenge and engage children in the learning process. This facilitates children to build on the model in their own learning. Children also role model learning for themselves, within peer to peer, partner work with similar ability, group leaders, mixed ability partners etc.

Impact on progress

Overall the teacher uses a range of teaching strategies, plans effectively and uses assessment and data for the cohort accurately to achieve progress for individual children. Within a lesson they use the 4 elements of DRICE to make an impact on progress by deepening thinking, role

modelling learning (also child led too), engaging and challenging children. The teacher ensures that within a lesson -

- Learning Objectives are set and children's own personalised targets are understood clearly - they know what they are aiming for as well as aspiring for more.
- Children are encouraged to explain thinking and reasoning to clarify understanding in the lesson supported by the teacher and peers.
- Assessment is used effectively by teacher and child - intervention by teacher to facilitate progress, peer to peer assessment by children, reflecting on success/failure, discussing their own outcomes etc.
- Children understand their next steps by the feedback given to them, how to take that forward whilst time is given to reflect on their own learning with the teacher and personally e.g. with high quality marking and time for the child to reflect and feedback.

Challenging expectations

The teacher sets challenging expectations for every child within the cohort - personalised, open ended, higher order tasks which promote outcomes which challenge them beyond their comfort zone. Within a lesson the teacher makes interventions which improve understanding, encourage depth of thinking and/or model that mistakes are a normal part of learning which enrich the learning process. Children are not afraid to challenge themselves and others (including the teacher) to ask, research and learn more. An aspirational environment is created and reflected within the classroom where the teacher creates and encourages independence and optimism. A culture of success allows pupils to feel safe to take risks and to sometimes experience failure.

Engaging in learning

Children are fully engaged in the learning process. This is created by a motivating environment set by the teacher which motivates all. They are challenged in purposeful learning which the teacher delivers clearly. Learning is valued and achievements and failures are valued as a positive learning experience for every child.