

Learning is fun at

## Park Hill Infants' School



# Teaching & Learning Policy

November 2024

Version 1.3

Review date: November 2027

Honesty

Respect

Courage

Kindness

Positivity

"All Different, All Equal, All Achieving"

Version	Date	Changes made	Updated by
1			
1.1	September 2020 November 2020	Added well-being and mindfulness section. Updated the 'Effective teaching and learning...' section. Added section on metacognition. Approved at 16.11.2020 FGB	Charlotte Clarkson
1.2	November 2021	Reviewed at Progress and Attainment Committee 15.11.21	FGB
1.3	November 2024	Updated/amended sections with references to 'learning challenges/hot, spicy, sizzling' (removed) to reflect current practice and use of adaptive teaching strategies. Approved by Senior Leadership Team and shared with all staff. Noted as approved at Curriculum Meeting 11/11/2024.	Laura Newell

“Our vision for Park Hill Infants’ is to provide a warm, caring and stimulating infant environment, which encourages values and celebrates diversity and individual excellence. We aim to make a difference to every child, regardless of any barriers to learning they may face. We want to instil a life-long love of learning in every member of the school community. We wish to equip all pupils with the skills necessary to become interesting, well-rounded individuals, who in turn will make a difference to others in their lives”.

“ALL DIFFERENT, ALL EQUAL, ALL ACHIEVING”

### Equality Statement

At Park Hill Infant School, we continue to teach our children about what it means to be strong, positive and productive members of society. We have always taught our pupils about equality and this remains an important part of our curriculum. We ensure that we always celebrate diversity, promote equality, demonstrate respect and stand together to challenge all forms of discriminatory language and behaviour.

We recognise that education is a vital tool for powerful, permanent and informative change. Our continuously evolving curriculum demonstrates our determination to use education to tackle issues of racism and inequality. We strive to ensure our curriculum and supporting resources reflect values of inclusivity, diversity, equality and belonging. We do this by planning to meet the needs of all genders, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all socio-economic backgrounds, children from different ethnic groups, religion and cultural backgrounds, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

### Introduction

We believe in the concept of lifelong learning and regard the teaching and learning which takes place in our school to be part of a learning continuum which begins before the child comes to school and continues into adulthood. Both adults and children learn new things every day. Learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone; in short, it should be fun. Through our teaching, we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives.

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## Ours School Vision and aims for Teaching and Learning

Through effective Teaching and Learning we aim to achieve our school vision by:

- Creating a happy, stimulating and vibrant learning environment, in which all learners' best efforts are valued.
- Recognising individual needs, and enabling all learners to achieve success and make progress, by providing an inclusive school community, which gives equality of opportunity to all.
- Helping children to develop lively and enquiring minds, the ability to question and make connections, to discuss rationally, and to apply their knowledge to learning tasks and physical skills.
- Helping children to develop positive attitudes, respect for self and others, an understanding of the world in which we live, and an appreciation of diversity in race, religion, culture and beliefs.
- Equipping children with the key knowledge, skills and understanding across the full curriculum which they need for the next phase of their education, and in order to maximise their life chances and economic well-being in adulthood.
- Developing an 'I Can' philosophy and environment in which learners are encouraged to take risks and be independent in their learning. We encourage children to be resilient and to develop a 'growth mind set' approach. We teach children that you can 'stretch your brain', reflect on learning and learn from mistakes.

Most of all, we want learning to be fun and memorable and for all children at our school in order for them to achieve and be the best that they can be.

We believe that people differ in the ways in which they learn most effectively. The conditions for optimum learning also differ in relation to the context in which the learning takes place. In some situations, we may prefer to learn by listening, in others we can only learn effectively by actively doing, and these preferences may differ for each individual. We encourage and enable children to make their own choices about how they prefer to learn. At our school, we aim to provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows all children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential.

Research shows us that people learn in many different ways, and respond best to different types of input, we therefore deliver our teaching in different ways using a range of adaptive teaching strategies, to address the needs of all our learners.

We ensure the best possible environment for learning by developing a positive atmosphere in which pupils feel safe and feel they belong. We use a growth mind set attitude to create an atmosphere which enables them to enjoy being challenged and not to be afraid to 'take a risk' in their learning. We encourage an 'I Can' approach where teachers and pupils have the highest possible expectations. We make sure that the children are comfortable and have access to toilets, drinking water, fresh air and a piece of fresh fruit to support their concentration.

All teaching will be structured to maximise learning opportunities, and lessons will be planned in accordance with the following principles:

- teaching should build on previous learning;
- pupils should be given the 'big picture' of the intended learning and understand how the lesson fits into this sequence;
- the teacher should explain the learning objective, and why the lesson is important
- the teacher should set out specific success criteria for the learning objective and offer differentiated levels of challenge/ use adaptive teaching strategies for the children in the class;
- the lesson should incorporate tasks and opportunities for a range of learning styles to be accommodated;
- children should be given opportunities to reflect on and review what has been learnt;
- there should be planned opportunities for regular feedback to the children, celebrating success, reviewing learning strategies, and assessing learning;

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- children should be shown how to self-assess and peer assess their learning against the session's learning objective and success criteria and have dedicated time to reflect and improve;
- children should be given opportunities to collaborate with others;
- teachers should indicate what the next step in the learning will be.

We offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways. These include:

- asking and answering questions;
- investigation and problem-solving;
- research and discovery;
- oral rehearsal such as story mapping;
- collaborative work – in groups / pairs
- independent work;
- whole-class work;
- use of ICT;
- visits to places of educational interest;
- creative activities;
- looking at pictures and other visual images, including appropriate media clips;
- listening and responding to music or audio material;
- play, including 'small world' play and role play;
- group discussions, debates and giving and listening to oral presentations;
- designing and making things;
- participation in athletic or physical activity.

We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way in which they learn best, and to reflect on how they learn; what helps them learn, and what makes it difficult for them to learn. Children learn that it is OK to make mistakes as this helps them to move forward in learning and are encouraged to think about learning and progress using a growth-mindset.

### **Super-skills for Learning and Values for Life**

At our school we promote 5 key values: Honesty, Kindness, Positivity, Respect and Courage. Children are encouraged to demonstrate these values both in their school and home life, treating others as they wish to be treated themselves

All children are encouraged to be independent and use our 'Superskills for Learning'. We believe an effective learner is someone who ... makes connections; collaborates; communicates; perseveres; is reflective; is confident; is creative; is a risk taker; is resourceful; is curious. Children are rewarded for using these skills in their learning and are able to recognise these both in their own, and others' learning.

### **Well-being and Mindfulness**

We have a daily focus on pupil well-being and mindfulness which is called the 'Daily Pause'. In each classroom the choices for mindfulness are displayed and the class decide alongside the teacher which strategies to practise when. This includes: a 'body scan', the use of a 'My Learning Journey' visual diary, Circle Time and Breathing exercises. These all help to centre the child and develop focus in preparation for learning.

### **Effective Teaching and Learning within the Curriculum**

When teaching, we focus on motivating the children, and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, so that they reach the highest level of personal achievement. We use Development Matters 2023 and the National Curriculum 2014 to guide our teaching and the coverage of objectives. From these objectives the Curriculum Leader and Subject Leaders decide which skills and

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knowledge should be taught in each term in each year group in order to ensure effective progression and revision of knowledge. This is recorded on long term Progression documents: 'Topic Webs' and medium term plans for each year group and subject specific 'Learning Ladders' across all year groups.

We plan our lessons using the clear learning objectives outlined on the 'Topic Webs'. Our daily session plans contain information about the tasks set, resources needed, and way in which we assess the children's work. We evaluate all lessons, so that we can modify and improve our future teaching.

Teachers plan sessions with the understanding that some areas of learning in the curriculum are 'cyclical' meaning that the curriculum will pass through these same areas of study repeatedly over time. This type of learning therefore spirals continually to become deeper and broader with every revisit (eg; Maths concepts such as division begin as sharing, then grouping and then into division number sentences). Some aspects of learning are 'linear', meaning that each step along the line of development is discreet and well defined and there are key things which should be learnt at each step before progressing (eg; topics and events in History). Teachers ensure that lessons are rich with new content and information, but that children have sufficient opportunities to ensure that previous learning is securely embedded, through practice, application in a wide range of contexts, evaluation of achievement and improvement.

Key knowledge is also embedded through the use of mental recall 'KIRFS' at the beginning of every Maths lesson and the revisiting of Phonics GPC/word reading recall at the start of each Little Wandle for Letters and Sounds Phonics session. We aim for children to become competent with key skills and knowledge and to independently make effective connections across the curriculum. Where there are gaps in their class's understanding, teachers address this in the next class session(s) and/or in small group interventions. By encouraging children to feel comfortable recognising and talking about their own learning in these ways, they become self-aware and more confident to 'have a go' at new challenges. Regular feedback from the children and monitoring of progress are therefore paramount when developing planning and next steps in sequences of learning.

Teachers make ongoing assessments of each child's progress, and they use this information when planning their lessons. It enables them to take into account the abilities of all children. Our prime focus is to develop and further the knowledge and skills of all children, including those with English as an Additional Language, (EAL), our most-able and those which we have assessed to have a Special Educational Need or disability, (SEND). Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for children with these needs. We strive to ensure that all tasks set challenge each child at their own level. When planning work for children with SEND, we give due regard to information and targets contained in the children's SEND Support Plan (SSPs). We value each child as a unique individual, and teachers are familiar with the relevant equal opportunities legislation covering race, gender and disability. We strive to meet the needs of all children, and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements related to matters of inclusion. We have high expectations of all our children and believe their work should be of the highest possible standard that they are capable of achieving based on their own individual starting points.

We set academic targets for the children in reading and writing, and share these with pupils and their parents. Teachers review the progress of every child after each lesson and more formally as a year group each half term. This is also reviewed through half termly pupil progress discussions with the DHT and AHT. This is moderated and pupil's current attainment and achievements are recorded using SIMS and Target Tracker. A comprehensive, end of year report is given to parents/carers, highlighting the progress that has been made and areas for development for the following academic year.

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## Metacognition

(teaching pupils to think about: how they think, approach and progress in the learning process)

In our lessons, teachers ensure that the 'WALT – We are Learning To...' is shared with and understood by all children at a level appropriate to them. We also ensure that children understand the 'success criteria' for the lesson – i.e. what they need to ensure they do or pay attention to in order to succeed and achieve. Usually, these success criteria will be decided jointly with the children, to ensure that they have ownership of their learning and a full understanding. There are many opportunities for children to extend their learning during the sessions.

We use a metacognitive approach to help children understand the different types of learning they encounter.

**Before learning:** At the start of every new topic or concept the children are asked 'What do they know already? What do they want to learn next?' which is then recorded on the class 'Thinking and Learning Wall'. At the start of each session the children identify with their teacher whether the day's WALT will include 'new learning' or 'recovery learning'. The children discuss what they know about the concept in talk partners and as a class in order for teachers to make formative assessment to move the learning forward in the most effective and appropriate way.

**During learning:** Throughout learning the children are given opportunities to revise, reflect and take part in a range of AFL strategies including self and peer assessment of their learning process. The children 'check in' with the teacher during mid lesson mini-plenaries where the children take time to think about what they need to do, or change in order to improve further.

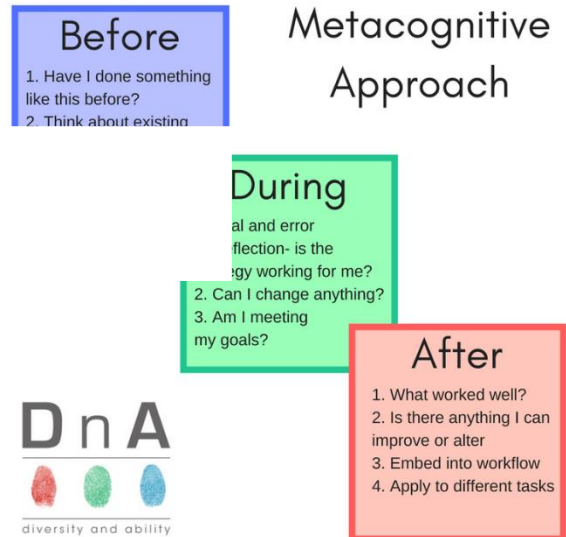
**After the session/topic:**

At the end of the topic the class reflect and evaluate what they have achieved. There is time for them to self and peer assess their learning again and they ask themselves 'What do I now know?'. This regularly includes using a 'Bubble and Block' plenary; where pupils use a bubble shaped post it note to write what they have achieved and a block shaped post it to show what they need to do, change or improve to make further progress. The class then re-caps and looks back on their learning process and work with the teacher to decide what they will learn next.

## Inclusive Learning

All teachers and support staff make every effort to establish good working relationships with all the children in the class. We treat children with kindness and respect. We recognise that they are all individuals with different needs, and treat them fairly. We give them equal opportunities to take part in all class activities and ensure that where work requires specific differentiation that this is done in a respectful manner with no discrimination. All children are given the opportunity to progress within their learning challenges as they become competent, with no 'ceiling' put upon learners. Teaching staff support pupils in a range of different ways including through verbal feedback, positive encouragement and the use of effective resources to scaffold understanding. All staff follow the school policy with regard to discipline and classroom management. We set and agree with children the class code of conduct, and we expect all children to comply with the rules that we jointly devise to promote the best learning opportunities for all. We praise children for their efforts and, by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. We insist on behaviour that is conducive to learning at all times. When children choose not to behave in an appropriate manner, we follow the guidelines as outlined in our *Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy*.

We ensure that all tasks and activities that the children perform are safe. When we plan to take children out of school, we follow a strict set of procedures to ensure safety: the venue is visited and risk assessments are



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completed. We inform parents, and obtain their permission, before the visit takes place. All adult / child ratios are adhered to when taking children off the premises.

We deploy learning support assistants, trainee teachers and other staff as effectively as possible. They work with individual children and with small groups.

### **Learning Environments**

Our classrooms are attractive, inspiring and well-resourced environments which are conducive to learning. We change displays frequently, so that the classroom reflects the current topics studied by the children and supports their new learning. We ensure that all children have the opportunity to display their best work. We use 'Thinking and Learning walls' and displays of work in progress across all subjects, in order to demonstrate effective learning strategies and to model good practice. Not all displays of children's work will be pristine and exemplary as some will display learning as it happens and may consist of 'anchor charts', post its, story maps and mind maps etc. However, some displays will showcase the highest standards to ensure that all take pride and have high expectations of what children can achieve. We use 'What makes Outstanding' throughout the school as a means of modelling our highest expectations to all pupils.

'Open classroom' sessions are held throughout the year, where parents are invited into the classroom by their child to view displays and progress in their workbooks, (this is in addition to the parent consultation evenings, weekly parent mornings and weekly 'drop in sessions').

All classrooms have a 'Book Corner' or designated reading areas with a variety of both fiction and non-fiction texts including poetry, newspapers and magazines. We believe that a stimulating and inviting environment sets the climate for learning, and that an inviting and well organised classroom promotes engagement, as well as independent and creative use of resources, which result in high-quality learning outcomes for all children.

All school staff follow our 'Teaching and Learning Handbook' which sets out the teaching and learning expectations in each year group in detail, (including specific classroom requirements).

### **The role of the Headteacher and the Headship Team**

The Headteacher and other members of the Headship team are primarily the leaders of teaching and learning. Their own practice models high quality teaching. They have a responsibility to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in the school. This will be achieved through:

- development and monitoring of a progressive, balanced and broad curriculum for all;
- formal performance management and appraisal of teaching over time, involving lesson visits, book analysis, learning walks and analysis of progress;
- team teaching and working alongside teaching colleagues;
- mentoring early career teachers (ECTs) and leading lesson study activities, when teachers plan, observe and evaluate their children's learning together;
- talking to children about their learning in lessons;
- analysing pupil's work in their books;
- analysing class learning environments;
- interviewing pupil's and acting upon their feedback;
- overseeing pupil assessment records.

### **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 staff development and our performance management both promote high-quality teaching;

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- monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment, particularly attainment and progress of vulnerable groups including Pupil Premium children;
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning approaches through the school's self-review processes, which include reports from the Headship team and middle leaders, and a review of the continuing professional development of staff.

### The role of parents and carers

We believe that parents and carers have a fundamental role to play in supporting their children's education. We do all we can to inform parents and carers about the curriculum, teaching and learning strategies, what their children are currently learning and the outcomes of assessment. We do this by:

- holding parent workshops throughout the school year specific to each child's year group and the range of subject areas;
- sending information to parents/carers in the form of 'topic webs' at the start of each half term, which outline the learning objectives that the children will be taught during the half term, (these are also available on the school website);
- sending end of year reports to parents/carers, in which we explain their individual child's progress and attainment, and indicate how the child can improve further;
- explaining to parents how they can support their children with home learning activities, for example regular shared reading and help with projects and investigative work;
- holding termly consultation evenings where their children's progress and attainment is explained to parents as well as their 'next steps for learning' targets;
- inviting parents into 'open classroom' to view their children's work in books and on displays;
- inviting parents to work with their child in our termly 'family curriculum workshop' sessions;
- inviting parents to work with their child in our weekly morning sessions;
- setting half termly KIRFS and regular Maths Challenges for children to work on with their parents at home;
- inviting parents to use online platforms such as 'Mathletics' and 'Collins Hub' to support their child at home;
- setting appropriate homework for all children – Phonics, handwriting and tricky word work in Reception, half termly topic projects in KS1, Words of the Week in Year One and Spellings in Year Two. In addition to the specific year group homework there is also daily reading for all.
- gathering information from parents about their children which may impact on their learning in school, also about their learning and achievements beyond the school gate.

We believe that parents/carers have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We would therefore like parents:

- to ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible in line with the national average, (at least 95.9%);
- to ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform, book bag with learning books/files and PE kit;
- to do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school;
- to inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school;
- to promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general;
- to fulfil the requirements set out in the home/school agreement;
- to support their child's 'home learning' by ensuring their child completes their homework, reads daily and by helping their child to research specific topics linked to learning in school.

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### Monitoring and review

The Headship team and the governing body monitor the school's Teaching and Learning Policy, and review it regularly, so that we can take account of new initiatives and research, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school. We will therefore review this policy every three years or sooner if necessary. At every review, it will be approved by the Senior Leadership Team.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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