

Clee Hill Community Academy Teaching and Learning Policy

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Aim

The purpose of the policy is to describe what Quality First Teaching (QfT) will 'look like' at Clee Hill Community Academy and achieve consistency of excellent practice across the whole school. We review this policy regularly to ensure it is up to date with the latest research about effective teaching and refer to various organisations including Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and a range of leading experts in the field.

At Clee Hill Community Academy, we believe in the concept of lifelong learning, and in the idea that 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.

Teaching & Learning is a highly complex process and the two processes are intimately related to one another. High quality learning stems from high quality teaching, which, we believe can be summarised by three important elements;

1. excellent subject knowledge
2. a thorough understanding of pedagogy
3. how children learn and high quality relationships within the class

Effective learning

In order for effective learning to take place key knowledge needs to be embedded into the long-term memory. This knowledge will then build links or webs with other pieces of knowledge to form a schema. New knowledge needs to connect with previous knowledge in order for children to make sense of it.

Effective learning takes place when children are motivated and engaged in their own learning and when their physiological and emotional needs are met and they feel safe; when they are able to contribute to the learning process; when they understand what they need to do to improve; when the teaching is interactive, engaging and meaningful; when it is well supported and scaffolded to meet their individual needs; when children learn about learning and can be independent in their ability to reflect on what they have done. It is important to recognise that children learn in different ways and bring their own experiences, both enthusiasms and interests, as well as worries and anxieties, and their cultural heritage to the classroom. All of these can impact on their pre-disposition to learning. Recognising these is fundamental to successful high quality teaching.

In the Sutton Trust article, [What Makes Great Teaching](#) several key aspects regarding effective teaching are explored;

1. Content knowledge. Teachers with strong knowledge and understanding of their subject have a greater impact on students' learning. It is also important for teachers to understand how students think about content and be able to identify common misconceptions on a topic.

2. Quality of instruction. This includes effective questioning and the use of assessment by teachers. Specific practices, like reviewing previous learning, providing model responses for students, giving adequate time for practice to embed skills securely and progressively introducing new learning (scaffolding), are also found to improve attainment.

Another four elements of effective teaching that have evidence showing a positive impact on learning are:

3. Classroom climate. This includes the quality of interaction between teachers and students as well as teacher expectations.

4. Classroom management. Such as the efficient use of lesson time and managing behaviour, with clear rules that are consistently enforced.

5. Teachers' beliefs. For example, the reasons why they adopt particular practices and their theories about learning.

6. Professional behaviours. This relates to professional development, supporting colleagues and communicating with parents.

Structuring the Learning Journey – structuring lessons, structuring learning

Teachers need to ensure that any lessons, or learning relates to a broader sequence of work, and are clear about what is expected at the end of the lesson and by the end unit of work. From here, lessons should be clearly structured in a way that is clear to the teacher and explicit to the learners. High quality lessons are characterised by clear learning intentions that are understood by the children. In addition all the children know what they need to do to be successful in the lesson – known as 'success criteria' or 'learning intentions'. In addition, there needs to be a clear purpose to the lesson, the introduction should be linked to previous learning, establish key vocabulary, and be ensure children know what they need to do to achieve.

Learning must meet the range of all children's needs and any adults should be deployed to support individuals or groups of children as necessary. In all lessons, access to resources, visual aids and equipment will give the children the best opportunity to learn.

The timing and pace of the lesson should be managed carefully to ensure it instils in the children a desire to complete work on time and to a high standard. As such it is important that the children understand from the outset what the shape of the lesson will be like and the direction their learning will take. During the main part of the lesson children should be active, working independently or in small groups. The work provided should be pitched at an appropriately challenging level and meet the children's learning needs.

Adults should provide high quality modelling and explanation - effective learning occurs when children have exposure and experience of high quality modelling. At Clee Hill Community Academy we believe this is when a teacher explains/ demonstrates 'their own thinking out loud'. This process 'shows' the children the process of transferring the thinking into the written word.

We believe the deep learning, meta-cognition occurs when children edit and redraft their work. This is an important process and children must be given time and opportunities to do this effectively. Once a small piece of work has been written, it should be shared 'assessed' by adults, themselves and /or their peers. Once feedback has been given and quality opportunities identified then children should be given the time to edit and redraft their work.

Sometimes it is helpful to re-direct or re-focus the lesson by the use of a 'mini-plenary'. This is where the lesson is paused and through use of good questioning it is possible to evaluate the progress made by the children, further model what they need to do by showing them an example from another child, or enable the class to advise another child to make improvements. The end of the lesson, or plenary has a variety of functions – however, the key purpose should be to focus on what has been learnt. The plenary should summarise learning and review the extent to which children have been successful in the task they have been

set; praise children for what they have achieved; reflect on their learning and consider what they have done well and what could be improved.

Assessment for Learning

High quality Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategies include five main strategies;

1. Clarifying, sharing, and understanding learning intentions and criteria for success – getting the students to really understand what their classroom experience will be and how their success will be measured.
2. Engineering effective classroom discussions, activities, and learning tasks that elicit evidence of learning o Questioning enables a student, with the help of their teacher, to find out what level they are at.
3. The teacher provides feedback to each student about how to improve their learning
4. Activating learners as instructional resources for one another – getting students involved with each other in discussions and working groups can help improve student learning. (Peers Assessment)
5. Activating learners as owners of their own learning –[self regulation of learning leads to student performance improvement](#)

Effective interactions: Questioning and Dialogue

In high quality lessons the three-way interactions and dialogue between the teacher and child and between the child and their peers encourages and develops their engagement, and understanding of the learning. These interactions should help children solve problems, share ideas, make decisions and reflect on their learning. They should also be used to develop a child's confidence and attitude to their learning and reinforce positive relationships. Self and peer assessment are powerful techniques for promoting these qualities. This can be achieved through the skilful use of open and closed questions that encourages reflective and evaluative thinking.

Other things to think about

- Ask fewer questions – in the EYFS think '4 statements/ 1 question'
- Give pupils time to think
- Avoid 'shotgun' questioning – consider 'probing' questions to dig down into their learning
- Use 'no hands up' / pot of fairness

Consider the purpose of your questions.

If you want to know what the pupils' knowledge is, ask a closed question (a question with one right answer). However, if you want to probe their understanding, ask an open question (one that prompts pupils to keep talking, like 'What more can you tell me?' or 'What do you mean by...?'). Think about staging your questions. Some teachers use closed questions first to put pupils into a context for thinking. Then they use open questions to probe and deepen the pupils' understanding in that context. What are the pupils meant to be getting out of the next question?

Teacher Role within discussion

Children need to know what 'good talk' and 'good listening' sounds and looks like. As teachers, we are in an excellent position to model this. Just as we model 'good writing' and our thought process through shared and group writing, we should also model listening and oracy skills. Teachers are modelling all the time, so everything we say or do serves as a modelling opportunity. Many different oracy skills can be taught during every lesson, every day. Using language that we want children to use when we talk or question is most important. Teachers are also able to model the physical, social and emotional strands of oracy. Using

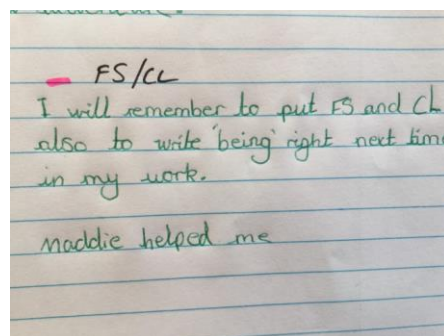
different tones and gestures, showing how we consider our audience are equally important and help children to learn. Teachers should consider the amount of talk that they themselves are doing within each lesson. It is not appropriate for teachers to always 'lead from the front' if we want children to become experts in exploratory talk. They must be given the opportunity to practice without too much inference from the teacher. During whole-class or group discussion teachers encourage and model different types of contributions and different roles. For example, teachers encourage others to challenge or summarise an idea or point. Teachers encourage children to talk to each other and not always through the teacher.

Vocabulary Word Gap

The deliberate teaching of vocabulary greatly supports the work done on developing oracy skills. At Clee Hill Community Academy, we believe that our classrooms should be language rich and by developing their ability to use this language through oracy we will be opening up greater opportunities for the future. At Clee Hill Community Academy, we support the acquisition of vocabulary by teaching it explicitly and giving many opportunities for it to be heard and to try it out in context. Listening is the first way that children learn language and that is why we teach listening skills as part of oracy. Opportunities for children to try out new words is as important to allow children to take ownership of the language.

Feedback (including Marking)

Feedback is a key aspect of high quality teaching and learning. The most effective feedback is immediate, in the class. When teachers use marking as feedback, this should be meaningful, directly linked to learning and manageable. Marking should initially correct 'know errors/misconceptions'. Quality time should be dedicated to allow pupils to act on this feedback with opportunities to correct or redraft work to improve upon it. See Feedback and Marking Policy



Cognitive Load Theory (CLT)

CLT is based around the idea that our working memory – can only deal with a limited amount of information at one time.

- Break down subject content when introducing new topics and pause regularly to check understanding.
- Present instructions clearly without using too many sources of information at the same time.
- Be wary of reducing cognitive load too much – the learning process should be manageable, but not overly fragmented.

Growth Mindset

At Clee Hill Community Academy, we also use the language of Carol Dweck's Growth Mindset. Creating an environment of continual learning throughout life encourages the acceptance of a Growth Mindset. Once we can accept that we can all get smarter, and learn, we understand that effort makes us stronger. At Clee Hill Community Academy we believe that anyone who can succeed and their best. Some key messages to children include:

- We remember it's always OK to make mistakes – we learn from them
- We never give up! We try a different approach, or use a different strategy
- We learn from each other – children often make the best teachers!
- We don't compare ourselves with others, but we do learn from others

- We challenge ourselves – which really helps us make progress
- We take risks – we don't limit ourselves by taking the easy option
- We join in as much as possible – and we learn much more by being involved
- We remember that mastering something new feels so much better than doing something you can already do
- We remember that the brain is making new connections all the time – the only thing you need to know is that you can learn anything!

Teachers actively encourage their students to make mistakes, foster a safe and secure environment in which falling over is not only accepted without criticism or humiliation, but in which it is actively encouraged as evidence of effective learning and of getting better at something. Mistakes are not a sign of weakness or low intelligence, it is a means of increasing one's intelligence. We praise our students for the growth-oriented process – what they accomplished through practice, study, persistence, and good strategies.



Classroom and behaviour management

Effective learning can only take place in well organised classrooms and where there are high and consistent expectations of behaviour, how resources are used, how we talk and listen to each other, how books and belongings are treated, how we move about the classroom and how we respect each other's right to learn. Managing behaviour by referring to and rewarding models of good behaviour exhibited by children in the classroom is always a preferred strategy. However, where children do misbehave this should be addressed in a manner that is least disruptive to the lesson and the other children's learning.

Learning environment

Classrooms must be well organised. They should be tidy and free of unnecessary clutter. Displays should reflect, celebrate and support learning. Key vocabulary should be highlighted and clearly displayed. Working Walls should be used to support children's learning.

The atmosphere in the classroom should be purposeful and focused on the task with all children engaged in their work. There will often be a quiet working 'buzz' in the best lessons that enables children to concentrate, but also ask questions and discuss ideas when working with other children when necessary.

In whole class phases to lessons all children should feel confident enough to be able to share their ideas and thoughts without feeling they will be put down by others. Every classroom should encourage mistakes as part of the process of learning.

We expect teachers to be mindful and flexible in how to group of children. We do not expect teachers to keep these groups 'fixed' for sustained period. While it may be appropriate to grouping children by ability for a particular lesson, or even part of a lesson, equally, using mixed-ability groups for a different lesson is important. Teacher must ensure that in all lesson (unless intentionally planned), there are a range of resources easily accessible to all children, such as; dictionaries, maths resources, Maps, Fact Files, laptops, etc.

The children, alongside the staff should take a shared responsibility for the classroom and corridor areas, making sure the spaces are kept clean, tidy and in good order at the beginning, during and at the end of the school day.

Working Walls

The main aim of a working display is to share children's learning, idea starters and other useful resources to support a pupil's learning by showing them the journey and steps needed to be success. Overall, their purpose is to provide a useful teaching resource in the classroom.

In Key Stage 2, we use working walls for English and Maths and if useful in other subjects too. In this way, we support children's learning by displaying outcomes, modelled examples and learning steps. This provides children with a visual exemplar of the success and how their learning towards this is developed. Ideas can be shared easily, and it can help pupils to work more independently, as it can act as a reminder or 'teacher'. It acts as a visual reminder.

Effective working walls should include:

- titles so children know instantly what the learning is.
- should show a journey of learning of time - in other words should build as the children learn each step and not be a completed display until the work has been complete;
- should include vocabulary, signs or symbols relevant to the learning;
- should show examples that show 'the steps to get there' and children understand what is expected of them;
- exemplar work (could be children's work);
- should be interactive and add to by teachers and children.

Displays also celebrate children's achievements. Writing rockets (good examples of writing) are changed weekly as part of the school's celebration of writing and displayed in the school library for all pupils to read.

Supporting pupils with additional needs

"Students learn in diverse, sometimes challenging, ways – but it's the unique thinkers who enable society to move forward" Dame Alison Peacock

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to develop strategies that allow all children to learn in ways that suit them best. Some pupils work well independently, some prefer active learning whereas others prefer formal methods.

At Clee Hill Community Academy, we use a variety of approaches to learning to build on previous knowledge, embed new learning and challenge through application. Modelling learning is embedded through concrete and pictorial techniques before approaching abstract ideas. Steps to learning are displayed in the classroom on working walls for pupils to refer back to and build upon their understanding.

PPG pupils each have a Pupil Premium passport which



focuses on overcoming any barriers to learning and is evaluated termly evaluate the impact of any provision. All pupils who need additional provision, including SEND pupils and PPG are a focus at provision mapping meetings every term (with the deputy head) in additional to pupil progress meetings (with the head teacher).

Presentation & Written work and books

Teachers must have the highest expectation of children at all times and this is also seen in the expectation of children's work. Their books are an important part of their learning journey – for themselves, their parents, their teachers and Senior Leaders. We expect work to be presented accordingly.

Monitoring, evaluating and developing the quality of teaching

The purpose of monitoring teaching and learning is to evaluate strengths, identify areas for development and further improve the quality of what we do. Some of this might be through the Performance Management process and at other times it might be as part of our ongoing cycle of self-evaluation linked to the School Development Plan (SDP). The quality of teaching and learning is monitored and evaluated in a number of different ways which may be through lesson observations, Learning Walks, scrutiny of planning and children's work/books and interviewing children.

Staff workload is regularly reviewed, and the school ethos ensures that staff are involved in decision making. Monitoring is always purposeful and used as a tool to assess current strengths and provide support for any areas of development. All of our teachers reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and plan their professional development accordingly. We do all we can to support our teachers in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice. At Clee Hill Community Academy, we expect our staff to have a growth mind set and see the process of learning as a continuous development to improve. Sharing good practice between staff is a key part of the improvement process.

Behaviour and safety

Each of our teachers makes a special effort to establish good working relationships with all children in the class and school. We treat the children with kindness and respect. We treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All our teachers follow the school policy with regard to discipline and classroom management. We expect all children to comply with these 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 good order and behaviour at all times. When children misbehave, we follow the guidelines for sanctions as outlined in our School Behaviour Policy.

We try to 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, risk assessments are completed, and various permissions are obtained. We inform parents or carers, and obtain their permission if required, before the visit takes place.

Race Equality and Equal Opportunities

All children have equal access to the curriculum regardless of their gender, disability or ability. We plan work that is differentiated for the performance of all groups and individuals and are committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work free from racial intimidation and harassment to achieve their potential.

Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for children with disabilities. We value each child as a unique individual, and teachers are familiar with the relevant equal opportunities legislation covering race, gender and disability. We will strive to meet the needs of all our children, and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements related to matters of inclusion.

Review

The Head Teacher and staff will review this policy every year.