

Ballycraigy Primary School

Policy for Learning and Teaching

LEARNING

Learning is the acquisition and application of both knowledge and Life Skills.

At Ballycraigy Primary we believe that the following features are necessary for learning to take place:

- a) **High levels of motivation and attitudes to learning.**
We believe that there must be an atmosphere of mutual respect where pupils are well behaved and self-disciplined. Children should persevere with tasks and enjoy learning. Children should take pride in their work, and value the contribution of others.
- b) **Systematic acquisition of skills and concepts and the ability to apply them.**
We encourage all children to make progress in line with their abilities. Children are encouraged to talk about what they are doing, and apply what they have learned to different contexts.
- c) **Development as independent learners.**
Pupils are encouraged to take personal responsibility for their learning, and think independently. They are also encouraged to show initiative and confidence in using available resources effectively.
- d) **Interaction with others.**
Pupils are given opportunities to collaborate and co-operate effectively in a variety of situations. They can listen and take account of others views.

TEACHING

Teaching is not just the dissemination of knowledge, but the ability to inspire and motivate others.

At Ballycraigy Primary we believe that four key features need to be present for effective teaching to take place:

- a) **Learning Environment.**
The teacher must create a good learning environment. It should be purposeful, supportive, safe motivating and rights respecting.
- b) **The use and appropriateness of a range of teaching approaches.**
Good teaching will include a variety of approaches including questioning techniques, problem solving tasks and using children's own ideas as a starting point.
- c) **Meeting the needs of our children.**
Effective teachers will have realistic expectations. These will be shown through good planning and learning outcomes for all pupils including for those with special educational needs.
- d) **Classroom Management.**
Effective teachers will make the best use of the time available. They will have organised class routines and suitable resources. They will maximise the use of classroom assistants.

ETHOS STATEMENT:

Our staff and pupils are eager to develop a sense of loyalty and respect for the school and for each other. Our school provides a welcoming, attractive and stimulating environment conducive to learning and we celebrate both academic and non-academic achievement. The positive morale of staff and pupils promotes a collaborative culture. This culture supports realistic, achievable expectations and is underpinned by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Parental involvement is encouraged and welcomed. Parents receive clear information about curriculum, pupil progress and the day to day running of the school. Parents are encouraged to play an active role in their children's education and in the life of the school.

The school has a caring ethos and all the staff members show a strong commitment to the care and welfare of the pupils. The school has comprehensive policies in line with DE guidelines and UNCRC, and all staff members adopt practices to ensure that these policies are implemented fully.

SCHOOL MOTTO:

Learning for Life

AIMS:

1. To provide a happy, safe and caring environment that is conducive to learning and teaching.
2. To foster close links between home, school and the community.
3. To provide a broad and balanced curriculum, based on the skills and capabilities necessary for life long learning.
4. To employ a variety of teaching strategies in order to cater for the various learning styles of the children.
5. To develop in pupils personal qualities of self-esteem, self-confidence, self-discipline, independence, responsibility, respect for self and others and a pride in their environment.
6. To provide opportunities for pupils to make full use of their talents and abilities.

THE LEARNER'S ROLE:

- Set goals and targets
- Seek information independently using a range of resources including ICT
- Come to school in good health maintained by adequate diet, exercise and sleep
- Attend school regularly, punctually and with all necessary books and equipment
- Follow the school's behaviour code
- Take responsibility for own learning
- Respect own and other people's rights
- Work collaboratively and individually when required
- Complete tasks to the best of their ability
- Take part fully in all learning activities

THE TEACHER'S ROLE

- Be secure in their knowledge of the curriculum and of the learning process
- To provide lessons which are well planned to match the differing needs and learning styles of the pupils
- Have a positive attitude to change and development
- Work collaboratively with other staff
- Be a good role model - punctual, well planned and organised
- Recognise the needs of individual pupils
- Respect pupil's rights and instil responsibilities
- Promote good discipline
- Ensure learning is progressive and continuous

STRATEGIES

- Whole class, group work and individual work are all used where and when appropriate
- Pupil's learning skills are developed to increase independence
- Discussion is encouraged
- Mixed ability and ability groups when necessary e.g. reading
- Practical work
- Effective planning
- Use of assessment

LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

- The physical environment is safe, stimulating, colourful, comfortable, well resourced and flexible. It supports the pupils' learning and celebrates their academic and non academic achievements.
- Learning intentions and success criteria are clearly displayed.
- Morale of staff and pupils is high. Good relationships at all levels enable the staff and pupils to work well together in a supportive and purposeful way.
- Contributions from staff and pupils are valued and respected.

ASSESSMENT

Formative assessment is used to guide the progress of individual pupils. It involves identifying each child's progress in each area of the curriculum, determining what each child has learned and what therefore should be the next stage in his/her learning. Formative assessment is mostly carried out informally by teachers in the course of their teaching. It includes an appropriate blend of self, peer and teacher review. The assessment tasks should have clearly identified purposes which are understood by the pupils. Suitable tasks for assessment include

- Discussion between the pupil and teacher, either individually or in small groups.
- Use of short teacher devised tests relevant to work being studied.
- Individual assignments.
- Marking and monitoring of class work, in line with marking policy.
- Teacher observation during tasks
- Self assessment records.

THE ROLE OF THE PARENTS

- Parents are kept up to date with curriculum developments
- Parents are kept informed about their child's progress to enable them to support the learning process
- Parents must ensure their child attends school in good health, regularly and punctually and with the equipment that they need
- Parents must ensure that the child is clean, has a clean school uniform
- Attend parent/teacher consultations
- Support the child in their learning giving due importance to homework, both written and learning
- Provide support for the discipline policy within the school and the role of the teacher
- Inform the school of any changes in the child's circumstances which may affect learning

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Teachers are encouraged to keep up to date with current educational developments and with research on how children learn. All school staff reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and plan their professional development accordingly.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The principal and subject co-ordinators monitor and review the implementation of the curriculum. They are required to

- Take the lead in policy development and the production of schemes of work designed to ensure progression and continuity in their subject throughout the school.
- Monitor progress in their subject and report to governors. This involves classroom observation and book scoops.
- Organise and purchase central resources within the budget and priorities identified in the school development plan.
- Support colleagues by advising on planning, resources and developments in their area.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

We are committed to inclusive education. The broad strategies which are implemented to help pupils with SEN are listed below. A more detailed account can be found in our SEN policy.

- A well organised support structure
- Recognition of a range of needs
- Appropriate classroom organisation and management
- A differentiated approach to the curriculum
- Classroom support through co-operative teaching
- Early identification and assessment
- Close involvement with parents
- Links with other agencies
- Cluster support mechanisms
- Specialist support when available
- Diversity of provision
- Behaviour support strategies