QUARTER PRIMARY SCHOOL

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT POLICY

AUGUST 2022

Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Rationale

Our school's vision, values and aims underpin our approach to teaching and learning.

We believe that children should be:

Safe – in a safe learning environment, where they are viewed as individuals

Kind – towards themselves, others, and the wider school community

Hardworking – by removing barriers and ceilings to learning

Inclusive – where they are respected and nurtured as individuals

Fun – to have joy in their learning and achieve their full potential

This policy has been created for all pupils, parents/carers, staff, and partners of our school community. We set out our policy in partnership with pupils and parents to ensure that their voices are heard through everything we do.

Leaders of Learning

In Quarter, we aim to create an inclusive, creative, and progressive teaching programme that meets the individual needs of all learners. Its foundations are based around the design principles of A Curriculum for Excellence and our flexible, coherent, and child-centred approach aims to develop the four capacities of being: successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors, and responsible citizens. When planning, we bundle experiences and outcomes appropriately and consistently use the benchmarks to ensure progressive learning experiences and to support achievement at the end of each level (Early, First, Second).

Our pupils are central to everything we do, and they are regularly consulted about curricular updates. Teaching staff are encouraged to take leadership of different areas of the curriculum, ensuring they continue their professional development and continuously strive for excellence.

Wider Stakeholders

To ensure consistency between home and school, we have regular target setting weeks where pupils set their targets in Literacy and Maths and Numeracy and discuss with their teachers and parents/carers at home. Parents and pupils look at their current learning and evaluate at home and then return to their teacher. We value our stakeholders' views, and this informs our next steps.

Professional Learning

Staff at Quarter continuously strive to strengthen and improve their practise, keeping abreast of current issues in education. We aim to build strong relationships with pupils and staff alike and always endeavour to create a supportive learning environment.

Most recently at Quarter, staff have undertaken 'Talk for Writing' training and around half of teachers have completed 'Maths Recovery' training. In addition, we have been developing Play Pedagogy in our P1/2/3 class. A member of staff has been delivering Forest School sessions using our local environment to target small groups of learners to raise attainment.

Teaching staff continuously engage in professional dialogue with colleagues and complete peer observations with stage partners. They self-evaluate against the GTCS professional standards and engage with research to support continual professional development.

Pupil Voice

Learners are regularly encouraged to lead their own learning at a class and school level. Teachers engage in discussions with pupils to ensure that learning contexts are meaningful and exciting for children.

At points throughout the year, the Head Teacher completes learning conversations with focus groups of pupils, where they are asked to reflect on the teaching and learning within their class.

Pupil Voice groups are central to what we do at Quarter. Once a term, pupils attend a meeting from a choice of five groups, where their ideas and opinions are taken on board and form our next steps. Pupils can select Maths Ambassadors, Literacy Ambassadors, Health and JRSO, Outdoor Learning and Pupil Council.

High Quality Lessons

We continuously aim to empower children in their learning. In Quarter we ask pupils about their previous learning to ensure we are building on existing skills. We plan in advance of lessons and share Forward Plans which highlight effective use of assessments. When planning for lessons, teachers select the relevant experiences and outcomes and create Learning Intentions and Success Criteria from these.

Learning Intentions should be:

- Linked to experiences and outcomes
- Describe what the learners should know, understand or be able to do
- Focus on knowledge and transferrable skills

These are shared with learners at the beginning of lessons and regularly referred to throughout teaching and learning.

Success Criteria should be:

- The measure used to decide if a learner has met the intended learning intention and how well
- Show how the learning will be assessed
- Improve the learner's understanding of steps they can take to meet the learning intention

Success Criteria aims to encourage independent learning and promote accurate and timely feedback.

All Learning Intentions and Success Criteria are differentiated to ensure we are Getting It Right for Every Child.

Assessments

The values that underpin Curriculum for Excellence must inform all aspects of assessment. These values are that the curriculum must be inclusive, must be a stimulus for personal achievement and must, through broadening of experience, be an encouragement towards informed and responsible citizenship. Assessment involves making judgements about children's and young people's learning. The important

decisions that are made based on these judgements must be made using sound evidence and professional integrity. Assessment approaches must avoid pre-conceptions and stereotypes and be fair to all involved: to children and young people, their families, and communities. (Building the Curriculum 5: A Framework for Assessment)

As outlined in 'Building the Curriculum 5' the purposes of assessment are:

• to support learning that develops the knowledge and understanding, skills, attributes and capabilities which contribute to the four capacities 4 Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy

• to give assurance to learners, parents, and others, that children and young people are progressing in their learning and developing in line with expectations

• to provide a summary of what learners have achieved, including through qualifications and awards

• to contribute to planning the next stages of learning and to help learners progress to further education, higher education, and employment

• to inform future improvements in learning and teaching Within St. Patrick's, we have a robust and integrated approach to developing assessment and moderation approaches through cluster and school collaborations, Validated Self-evaluation activities, and through Quality Assurance and Moderation. Assessment is an integral part of daily

learning and teaching. Staff get to know their learners well, build up a profile of their progress, strengths and needs and involve them in planning what they need to learn next. Teachers frequently take stock of their learners' achievements and progress to be able to plan ahead and to record and report on progress. This is vital in ensuring that learners' progress is on track and that action is being taken to address any problems at the earliest possible point. Assessment involves gathering, reflecting on, and evaluating evidence of learning to enable staff to check on progress. Teachers use a range of assessment approaches to assess the different types of achievement across the curriculum. Forms of assessment within the school include:

Observation

• listening to pupils talking with one another.

• discussing with individuals, groups, and the class.

• questioning pupils about their understanding of their work.

Written Responses

• various kinds of "short-answer" assessments.

• writing longer pieces.

• tasks drawn from the catalogue of national test units.

Practical Activities

• planning and conducting experiments.

• co-operating in a project.

• evidence of knowledge or skills acquired or put into practice from various products such as pictures, music, a report of an investigation or experiment.

Self- and peer assessment can provide evidence: where possible, pupils should be encouraged to reflect on their own work and compare their performance against agreed criteria. It may sometimes be helpful to have pupils consider each other's work against these same criteria.

Formative Assessment

Formative Assessment strategies have been developed throughout the school and have proven to be of value in raising attainment and establishing independent and co-

operative learning. These strategies and approaches should now be developed to incorporate all curricular areas where appropriate, particularly the use of feedback for pupils as a form of assessment.

RECORDING

There should be three types of record:

Evaluations

 • a succinct account of identified teaching aims covered and the learning outcomes or they relate to.

 • an indication of teaching methods used.

 • an indication of how the class and groups have coped.

 • evaluative comment on curriculum and methods.

Assessment of ongoing work

• class jotters

 • question banks

 • high quality contextualised assessments

 • termly assessment

Moderation

Within Quarter, ongoing moderation activities within the school and learning community provide opportunities for staff to engage with other professionals to arrive at a shared understanding of standards and expectations for the broad general education. Teachers work together, drawing on guidance and exemplification and building on existing standards and expectations to:

• plan learning, teaching, and assessment

 • check that assessment tasks and activities provide learners with fair and valid opportunities to meet the standards and expectations before assessments are used • sample evidence from learners' work and review teachers' judgements

 • agree strengths in learners' performances and next steps in learning

• provide feedback on teachers' judgements to inform improvements in practices

Moderation helps to raise standards and expectations and levels of consistency across teachers and schools. This ensures that there is an appropriate focus on outcomes for learners, that learning is at the appropriate level and that learners develop the skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work, including higher order thinking skills, which will allow them to be successful in the future. Teachers being involved in developing their assessment approaches through participation in moderation activities is a highly effective form of professional development.

Planning, tracking, and monitoring

Within the school we plan appropriately through long- and short-term planning. This includes the use of termly Forward Plans and Daily Plans. Teachers make effective use of a range of evidence to plan next steps. Children are given opportunities to take on leadership roles and play an active role in the school.

Staff use evidence of learning from a broad range of contexts to track and monitor how a learner is progressing and that learning is secure. The evidence will be different depending 6 Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy upon the kind of learning being assessed, the learning activity and learners' preferences about how to share what they have learned.

Evidence comes from day-to-day learning as well as from specific assessment tasks, activities, tests, and examinations. Judgements about learners' progress need to be dependable. This means that assessments must be valid and reliable. Assessment approaches should be proportionate and fit for purpose: different forms of assessment are appropriate at different stages and in different areas of learning. It is important that an overview is taken across all learners' assessment experiences to ensure breadth, balance, and coherence in approaches. It is also important that arrangements do not place excessive burdens on learners and teachers, which divert their time and effort from learning and teaching.

Teachers regularly update Tracking and Monitoring Spreadsheet and meet termly with SMT to discuss attainment and achievement for all learners. Regular consultation and discussion ensure that staff fully understand learners' needs in relation to their barriers to learning and those facing additional challenges. Staff and SMT have regular opportunities to analysis data to ensure continuous improvement.