

Yorke Mead Primary School

Teaching and Learning Policy

December 2015



Our School Vision Statement

BRINGING LEARNING to LIFE

We are a school dedicated to creating an environment where children are able to grow into happy, well-rounded individuals with a love of learning through which they can achieve to the best of their abilities.

We want our pupils to enter the wider world as

- o Happy, positive individuals*
- o Responsible citizens who make a positive contribution*
- o Confident, resilient, healthy & life-long learners.*

DARE TO...

D - Determination

A - Ambition

R - Resilience

E – Enjoyment

T - Trust

O - Openness

By adopting a whole school approach to learning and teaching across our school we aim:

- to provide consistency in the same high standards across the whole school and agreement on expectations.
- to enable children to learn as efficiently as possible
- to enable staff to teach and facilitate learning as efficiently as possible.
- to give children the skills they require to be life- long learners.
- to provide an inclusive environment for all children built on quality first teaching
- to learn from each other, through the adoption of a collaborative enquiry based approach to teaching and learning, where good practice is shared.

All our teaching is underpinned by the confidence that every learner can improve and that being stuck or 'in the pit' is a necessary and natural phase of new learning.

There is no single recipe for improving learning and teaching in a school. However, this policy outlines some of the key elements, which at Yorke Mead we believe are key to raising standards in learning and teaching.

How we learn:

10% of what we READ
20% of what we HEAR
30% of what we SEE
50% of what we SEE and HEAR
70% of what is DISCUSSED with OTHERS
80% of what is EXPERIENCED PERSONALLY
95% of what we TEACH TO SOMEONE ELSE

William Glasser

At Yorke Mead Primary School we use Active Learning Strategies and Creative Curriculum Approaches throughout our school.

We believe that all of our children can benefit from the methods and styles of teaching that stimulate and enable the development of higher order thinking skills and meta- cognition (learning to learn).

We seek to provide our children with open ended learning tasks with a focus on problem solving, discussion, collaboration and imaginative thinking that lead to the following learning behaviours:

- questioning and challenging
- envisaging what might be
- exploring ideas, keeping options open
- reflecting critically on ideas, actions and outcomes
- making connections and seeing relationships

Our curriculum is based around children using the four styles of thinking evident in ***Philosophy 4 Children (P4C)***

- Caring Thinking
- Collaborative Thinking
- Creative Thinking
- Critical Thinking

Explained simply each of these thinking styles involve the following:

Caring Thinking

This can be considered in two ways. On a personal level it is caring enough to do the best you can, persevering with a task and caring sufficiently about it to reach a solution. At a wider level caring thinking would include considering the impact of your thinking and actions on others.

Collaborative Thinking

This aspect focuses on people coming together to find a solution, working as a team or a community for the greater good.

Creative Thinking

At its simplest level creative thinking is about trying new approaches to find a solution - thinking outside the box. It may involve new approaches or simply tackling things from a different angle.

Critical Thinking

This is about reflecting on your learning, thinking or outcomes in order to consider how it could be improved or developed to make it even better – *if I was to do this again what might I change next time and what would I want to keep the same?*

Key aspects of Learning and Teaching at our school

All lessons have ...***Clear Learning Intentions.***

- Learning intentions are shared orally with the children and displayed on the wall/whiteboards
- Learning intentions in English and maths, that are taught daily, are presented as part of the Learning Journey for that week/ unit of work so that children can see how their learning is building and where it is going to
- Marking is linked to the key learning intentions

In KS2 children will write the learning intentions in their books or as part of their titles. Children in KS1 may be given the learning intention to stick in or an adult may write it.

To ensure learning intentions are shared effectively teachers will:

- use language such as '*By the end of today's lesson you will know.../be able to.../understand...*'
- be written in child friendly language to ensure children understand the learning intentions
- make learning intentions specific
- ensure they share learning intentions at the start of the lesson but also refer to these mid lesson during 'pit stop' points and in the plenaries
- develop steps to success/ success criteria with children in order to break the learning intentions down to support children's successful learning

Success Criteria or Steps to Success

- enable children to be clear about how they will achieve the learning intentions
- support children in achieving the learning intentions
- may be displayed for or ideally drawn up with the children
- enable children to self-assess their work or other pupils' work against the success criteria

All lessons are clearly ...***Differentiated to enable all pupils to access learning.***

- All learners are appropriately challenged – this may be termed as ***Super, Mega, Ultra*** (and occasionally ***Turbo***) with children given the options of choosing their appropriate level of challenge.
- ***Pit Stops*** are used to allow children to reflect and self- assess against the chosen level of challenge so that they may increase or drop down a level as appropriate.
- Planning shows clear differentiation – this may be in terms of the support offered to children or the expectations for a group
- A range of learning styles are catered for through the VAK approach (visual, audio, kinaesthetic)

All pupils are ...***Actively engaged in learning and working co-operatively.***

- Pupils are actively engaged during all parts of the lesson- teachers take into account children's concentration span and ensure children are not sitting passively for long periods
- Opportunities to talk are regular features of the lessons, and the use of ***lolly sticks*** to randomly pick contributors keeps all children ready to respond

- Mini whiteboards/ card activities or use of practical resources to enable children to engage in '**show me**' activities for short bursts of activity keep children active and engaged
- Visual artefacts and auditory input are all used creatively to enhance learning.

We believe that it is important for pupils to ... **Talk during lessons**.

When we talk we do more than simply articulate our current level of thinking. The very act of talking forces us to organize our thoughts and so deepens understanding. It is partly this reason why we remember so much what we teach to others.

At Yorke Mead we believe that **Talking** is **central to learning**. All lessons will include periods of both planned and unplanned opportunities to discuss questions, share ideas and extend thinking. **Think, pair, share** and **Talk Partner** activities feature regularly in lessons. Pupils are trained to use appropriate body language and understand that their talk is as valued as their written work.

Examples of Talk Partner Activities may include:

- Creating a list together
- Sharing you thinking or ideas
- Disagree with your partner
- Share a strategy
- Find out from your partner etc. etc.

It is also an expectation at Yorke Mead that **children respond in full sentences** when they are talk in class. As children begin to talk in extended sentences assessment of their understanding is far greater and they also develop better oracy skills which in turns leads to better written skills – a child will not write a sentence they cannot yet say.

The school has adopted the Pie Corbet **Talk for Writing** strategies to ensure children can orally retell a story before we expect them to write one.

Adults make..... **Effective use of questioning** pupils during talk sessions by:

- Using open ended questions
- Providing wait time (3-5 seconds) – pupils need time to formulate their responses before replying
- Returning to an individual or giving advance notice that a question is coming their way
- Allowing pupils to articulate and share their responses together in pairs or small groups so they are able to share with a response *we think that...*
- Ensuring pupils fully understand the question

Children regularly change their**Learning Partners**

Each week the children change their learning partners. These are randomly selected using the lolly stick or a computer hat programme. This means children are used to working with children of all different levels and also have opportunities to work with new people all the time.

Teachers ensure children are**Appropriately challenged** and at times feel **stuck**.

The Pit and 5B's

In order to learn children need to be challenged in their learning and therefore to be making mistakes. Children who do not learn to experience the feelings of being stuck may not learn to persevere when they eventually are challenged. Children may also have a tendency to become worried or feel anxious when they are 'stuck'.

To help children to relate to feeling stuck we use the analogy of "**The Pit**" as a symbol in the classroom. Children are taught that being '**in the pit**' is a good thing as they have a chance to learn something new. They are encouraged to discuss the feelings when they are first stuck and the normality of anxiety here and then the euphoria of succeeding and getting 'out of the pit'.

To help them get out of the pit we encourage the children to use the **5 B's**. These should be used in the following order in order for the children to work initially independently to work to a solution and

then with a peer before seeking support from the adult. This is to encourage effective independent learning.

The 5B's are:

- **Brain** – Think it through. Try different ways.
- **Book** – Look in your books. Have you done something similar before that will help?
- **Board**- Use the displays/working wall around the classroom.
- **Buddy**- Talk to your learning partner. Can they help you or teach you.
- **Boss**- If all else fails ask the boss, talk to an adult in the class.

Children are... ***immersed in the learning through the use of creative experiences.***

In order to help children develop a full understanding of topics we aim as far as possible to use literature, drama, role play, art, music, real life problem solving etc. to bring the topics to life. Children experience the topics through these wide range of creative experiences combined with active learning strategies enabling them to appreciate the links across the curriculum and between areas of learning. The use of workshops and curriculum days enhances the learning experiences.

All pupils receive regular and clear ...***Feedback which enhances learning.***

- ***Assessment for learning*** is embedded in everyday practice and is used to inform teaching and learning.
- Pupils regularly meet with their teachers in ***pupil teacher conferences*** held during the main singing assembly to discuss their progress and next targets.
- Books are marked promptly using ***pink and green marking***. Pink highlights areas of praise for children whilst green helps to identify areas for growth. Marking is related to the main learning intention.
- Pupils are given time to respond to marking – ***purple pen time***, and to address any issues raised in the marking.
- Pupils are encouraged to self -reflect on the learning and to create a ***dialogue*** with their teacher about their learning and how they feel about this.
- Pupils may also on occasions peer mark one another's work using the success criteria (see feedback and marking policy).

Learning is enhanced through the use of ...***Effective Behaviour Management.***

Our positive behaviour policy is centred on children taking responsibility for learning and agreed rewards for displaying positive learning behaviour or sanctions for disturbing learning. For details please see the Yorke Mead Behaviour Policy.

In addition to learning intentions related to subjects being taught each class is assessed by the adults working with them on the strengths and areas for development in their learning behaviours. These are rated red for those in need of development, amber for those developing and green for areas of strength. Teachers then choose areas that are amber as a focus for the class to develop through a ***learning behaviour learning intention***. The aim is by changing the amber behaviours to green, the red behaviours will look after themselves.

Learning behaviour intentions are shared and displayed in the classroom alongside other learning intentions.

Learning is enhanced through ...***Bright, enabling and attractive learning environments.***

The environment will enable children to be immersed in the focus of the topic. Throughout the schools ***displays*** reflect the learning children have been working on and enable the learning to be shared by others. Quality and presentation are important in creating an environment people can be proud of. The use of Working ***Walls*** supports learning both in the classroom and in key working areas throughout the school.

Each classroom will have a working wall for core subjects and for the key themes for learning across the curriculum. These will reflect the current work focus and include children's questions, key aspects of learning, key vocabulary, visual stimuli and artefacts to stimulate thinking.

Resources are accessible, well organized and clearly labelled so that children can be independent in accessing the resources.

Children's learning is extended beyond the classroom ...**Learning Outdoors** is as equally valued as learning in the classroom.

Children learn through their experiences, and the opportunity to use the outdoors should be taken whenever this will enhance the experience for children. This may be the use of the outdoors for stimulation, exploring for natural resources, first- hand experience of simply taking the same learning that could happen indoors outdoors.

The school has an outdoor classroom situated in the school grounds, a large field and an orchard/woodland area/ local river/ canal network etc. on the doorstep which enables a wide variety of easily accessible learning areas.

Children will also have the opportunity to take at least one trip out of school to enhance the learning experience each year, and children in KS2 often experience a number of trips. In addition the children have the opportunity to experience two school journeys to PGL activity centres – one in Year 5 and one in Year 6.

All staff have been involved in developing this policy and approach to learning & teaching, and will continue to be involved as the process evolves.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Home Learning Policy.