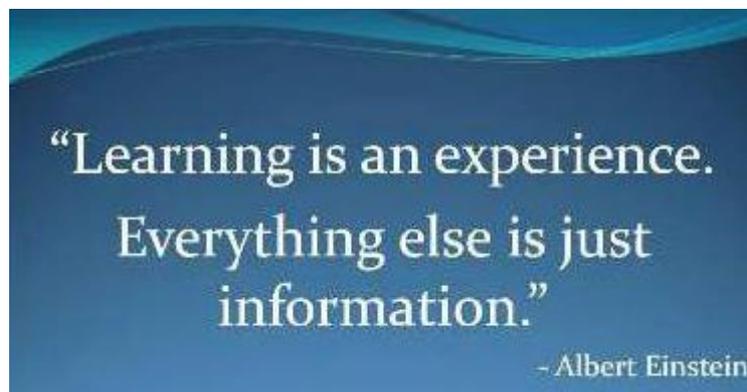




# THE FEDERATION OF SINGLEGATE AND WILLIAM MORRIS PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Learning and Teaching Policy



**K Inglis**  
**September 2016**





## **RATIONALE**

At Singlegate and William Morris Primary School we strongly believe in the concept of lifelong, child initiated learning, where both adults and children learn new things every day. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding, enjoyable and a successful experience for everyone. Through learning and teaching opportunities 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 learning and teaching experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives.

## **AIMS**

At Singlegate and William Morris Primary School we recognise that as individuals we learn best in different ways. In our schools we provide a rich and varied diet of learning experiences that allows all children to develop their skills and abilities to reach their full potential. Our schools ethos permeates all aspects of learning and teaching. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the children at Singlegate and William Morris Primary School are provided with outstanding learning and teaching experiences that lead to consistently high levels of pupil engagement and achievement. Learning should be challenging, rewarding and enjoyable, achieved through teaching that is relevant, creative and enthusiastic.

At Singlegate and William Morris Primary School children:

- become independent, confident learners who take increasing responsibility for their own learning
- become resilient, reflective, resourceful and reciprocal learners
- feel secure in school and are willing to take risks in their learning
- acquire the necessary skills for learning, now and in the future, by developing lively, enquiring minds and the ability to question, share ideas and work co-operatively
- develop self-respect, understanding the ideas, attitudes and values of others, and are taught to respect other people's feelings;
- access a rich, balanced and child-initiated curriculum in a variety of ways;
- use language and number effectively, as a foundation for learning, and to feel confident in all areas of the curriculum;

- understand their community, and feel valued as part of it;

**WILLIAM MORRIS PRIMARY SCHOOL**





- develop an understanding of the core British Values of democracy, the rule of law, mutual respect, individual liberty and tolerance of those with difference faiths and beliefs;
- develop an understanding of other beliefs, cultures and ways of life and, in so doing, learn how to promote positive attitudes towards other people.

## EFFECTIVE LEARNING

We understand that as individuals we learn in many different ways; we therefore employ a wide range of teaching strategies to address the needs of all of our learners and so retain their concentration, motivation and application.

We believe that children learn best when:

- they are interested and motivated;
- they experience success;
- they are challenged and stimulated by our high expectations;
- they are provided with tasks that take into account ability, interests and needs;
- they are provided with opportunities to think independently, creatively, critically and collaboratively;
- quality concrete and visual resources are provided;
- they feel secure and are aware of boundaries;
- they are involved in assessing and measuring their own learning;
- they are immersed in well-paced lessons;
- presented with varied and flexible teaching styles, dependent on the task and the individual needs of the learner (Visual-Auditory-Kinaesthetic);
- provided with a clear focus, through explicit learning intentions (WALT) and success criteria, which identify what learners' need to understand and be able to do in order to achieve;
- teaching assistants are active in supporting the children's learning;
- positive behaviour management strategies are used to motivate and encourage children to respond appropriately and help to create a climate for learning;
- opportunities for self-evaluation and reflection are built in throughout the session;
- they are involved in setting and reviewing personal targets;
- a stimulating and purposeful learning environment is created;

WILLIAM MORRIS PRIMARY SCHOOL





- learning builds on children's prior skills, knowledge and understanding;
- a range of questions are used e.g. open questions and closed questions, and children's own questions are valued.

At Singlegate and William Morris Primary School we offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways. We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn best.

Planned learning experiences include:

- Investigations and problem-solving;
- Research and discovery;
- Collaborative paired or group work;
- Asking and answering questions;
- Use of ICT, including the safe use of the Internet;
- Fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest;
- Visitors with first hand experience or expert knowledge;
- Family events that facilitate collaborative learning partnerships
- Watching interactive clips and responding to music through movement;
- Debates, role-play and oral presentations;
- Designing and making things;
- Participation in regular physical activity.

## **THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

At Singlegate and William Morris Primary School we believe a positive, stimulating learning environment sets the climate for learning and enables all children to access the curriculum.

The learning environment should:

- be welcoming and inviting to children and adults by encouraging interaction as well as providing opportunities for good communication between home and school;
- it should reflect diversity;





- support and challenge learning by ensuring appropriate resources are accessible to the children, encouraging them to be independent in different areas of learning;
- remind children that they are working towards personal goals and targets in their learning;
- celebrate achievement and value effort in the display and presentation of children's current learning across the curriculum, in turn raising self-esteem;
- be stimulating and thought provoking with the use of interactive displays and resources and different areas within each classroom, which encourage children to explore, investigate and play;
- create an environment where children feel they belong and feel proud of;
- be safe and hazard free, both emotionally and physically;
- encourage co-operative and collaborative learning and good working relationships, through the flexible use of space and the ability to adapt to whole class, group and individual learning;
- promote an appropriate atmosphere for learning supported by the school's expectations, Code of Conduct and Pupil's choices;
- be well organised, labelled and uncluttered.

## EFFECTIVE TEACHING

Our teaching is focused on motivating all children, building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, ultimately enabling them to reach the highest level of personal achievement. All adults generate high levels of enthusiasm for, participation in and commitment to learning. Teaching promotes children's high levels of resilience, confidence and independence when they tackle challenging activities.

Teachers have consistently high expectations of all children. Drawing on excellent subject knowledge, teachers plan astutely and set challenging tasks based on systematic, accurate assessment of children's prior skills, knowledge and understanding. They use well-judged and imaginative teaching strategies that, together with sharply focused and timely support and intervention, match individual needs accurately.

Teachers make ongoing assessments of each child's progress, and they use this information to plan the appropriate 'next steps' for learning, enabling them to take into account the abilities of all of their children. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge and skills of all of our children. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability. When planning work for children with Special Educational Needs, we give due regard to information and targets contained in the children's individual Passports to Success or Statements of Special Educational Needs.

WILLIAM MORRIS PRIMARY SCHOOL





Teachers also modify teaching and learning as appropriate for children with disabilities. We will strive to meet the needs of all our children, valuing each child as a unique individual, ensuring that we meet all statutory requirements related to matters of inclusion.

We identify Special Interest Group children who demonstrate a significantly more advanced level of ability or potential than most pupils of the same age in one or more curriculum area or in any of the following:

- Physical talent
- Artistic talent
- Mechanical ingenuity
- Leadership
- High intelligence
- Creativity

We ensure that the identified children are given myriad opportunities to develop and pursue their Special Interest as part of an enriched curriculum as well as extra-curricular activities. (See Special Interest Group Policy). In addition we identify 'More Able' children within each class, and adapt the learning experiences planned for them to ensure they are effectively challenged. We create an ethos where it is 'cool to be clever' and where gender stereotypes are dismantled and transcended – for example, boys are valued and accepted for being good at art and/or singing and girls are valued and accepted for being good at football.

Teachers systematically and effectively check children's understanding throughout lessons, anticipating where they may need to intervene and doing so with notable impact on the quality of learning. Lessons are 'chunked' so that different groups of children can receive differentiated inputs from adults. Appropriate and regular homework contributes to children's learning in partnership with families. Marking and constructive feedback from teachers and other children occurs regularly, with a clear impact on children's progress.

Curricular targets are set and reviewed with the children at least once per half term in reading, writing and Mathematics. These targets are shared with families during our Pupil Achievement Review days and are recorded on our Pupil Progress Reports. Children are heavily involved in the review and generation of curricular targets, taking ownership of them, measuring their progress towards them and identifying different ways in which they can be achieved.

At Singlegate and William Morris Primary School we strongly believe that lessons must be purposeful, making explicit links with other areas of the curriculum and identifying the transferable skills that children will use. They are planned with clear learning objectives which come from the 2014 National Curriculum and the National Programmes Of Study in English, Mathematics and Science. Learning objectives

WILLIAM MORRIS PRIMARY SCHOOL





support our annual project themes (appendix 1). Each lesson has a clear, child-friendly a WALT (We Are Learning To) and Success Criteria, outlining the knowledge and skills children will use along with instructional steps for completion. Plans are evaluated on a weekly basis and monitored by members of the Senior Management Team.

Teaching staff and teaching assistants establish and maintain excellent working relationships with all of the children in the class. We treat the children with kindness and respect. We recognise that they are all individuals with different needs, but we treat them fairly, and give them equal opportunities to take part in class activities. All our teachers follow the school's Behaviour For Learning Policy with regard to discipline and classroom management. Each class works collaboratively to set out their 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, in doing so, we help to build positive attitudes towards the school and learning in general.

Our classrooms are language-rich, dynamic learning environments. We adapt them to reflect our current learning projects, often transforming them into new worlds of learning, such as a frozen ice palace or Ancient Greece. Learning prompts are positioned strategically around the room to support the children's understanding and vocabulary. We celebrate all children's work by displaying it regularly throughout the year, and we ensure that the children's voice is an integral part of all displays, through the use of speech bubbles, questions, quotes and thinking key responses. All classrooms have a dedicated class library area with a selection of both fiction and non-fiction books.

All of our teaching staff are encouraged to regularly reflect on their strengths and weaknesses, and we plan their professional development accordingly. We do all we can to support all of our teaching staff in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice.

## **OUR CURRICULUM**

Through our innovative, personalised curriculum we aim to instil a love of learning in children, as well as developing lifelong enquiry skills to enable them have a 'thirst for learning' in the future. We plan for a cross-curricular approach, forging links between the different areas of learning where appropriate. Across the school we plan for progressive learning in the following key areas:

- English
- Mathematics
- Understanding The World
- Expressive Arts and Design
- Personal, Social, Citizenship and Health Education
- Physical Development

**WILLIAM MORRIS PRIMARY SCHOOL**





We explore the core British Values with the children, such as democracy, the rule of law and mutual respect, and we weave these carefully into our topic choices, assemblies and extra-curricular events.

We know how important it is to capture children's interest and enthusiasm at the beginning of a new topic, so we plan 'launch' events to promote this. These are usually practical learning experiences that give children a taster of what to expect during their project, encouraging them to ask lots of questions and to share what they would like to learn about through the topic. Additionally, we arrange trips and workshops linked to each topic designed to provide the children with further real life learning experiences. As well as launching the topic in an engaging way, we also plan events for the children to express what they have learnt at the end of each project, showcasing their new knowledge and skills. These 'express' events include opportunities to share learning with other classes, family events and themed days.

## **THE ROLE OF GOVERNORS**

Our Governing Body support, monitor and review the school's approach to learning and teaching through regular planned visits to the school and discussions with teaching staff; particularly the Subject Leader of their designated subject.

In particular they:

- attend School Improvement Planning and Review meetings;
- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
- ensure that the school buildings and premises are used optimally to support learning and teaching;
- check teaching methods in the light of health and safety regulations;
- seek to ensure that our staff development and our performance management both promote good quality teaching;
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's learning and teaching approaches through the school's self-evaluation systems, which include classroom visits and reports from the Executive Headteacher and subject leaders.

## **THE ROLE OF FAMILIES**

We believe that families have a fundamental role to play in helping their children to learn. Strong partnerships between home and school are used both to inform parents about what and how their children are learning, as well as encouraging active participation in collaborative learning experiences.





We develop these partnerships by -

- holding curriculum evenings and workshops to explain school strategies linked to all aspects of the curriculum;
- sending half-termly information to parents, which outlines the projects and key objectives that the children will be learning at school;
- sustaining a managed learning environment and a regularly updated website to communicate information;
- providing half termly Pupil Progress Reports;
- sending parents annual reports in which we explain the progress made by their child, and indicating how their child can improve further;
- explaining to parents how they can support their child with homework, and suggesting, for example, regular shared reading and support with their projects and investigative work;
- operating an 'open door' policy, ensuring that both teachers and members of the Senior Leadership are always willing and available for informal discussions;

We believe that parents have a responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We therefore ask parents to:

- ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible;
- ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and PE kit;
- do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school;
- inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect their child's learning;
- promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general.

**Policy review: September 2017**

