

Learning and Teaching Policy

March 2025

Ethos

At Botanic Primary we aim to provide a positive, supportive and stimulating environment for all our children.

We aim to provide an environment where children are:

- **Encouraged**
- **Seen**
- **Valued**

Children are encouraged

We wholeheartedly encourage children to take pride and put forth their best efforts in everything they do. We believe that when students strive to do their best, they not only achieve success, but also contribute positively to our school community and their wider community in the long term.

Children are seen

We see the children for their strengths, personal qualities and individuality. We notice and celebrate their achievements, not only with learning but also with personal growth (no matter how small something may seem). Every child's accomplishments matter - we ensure that our recognition is diverse and inclusive. By recognising both academic and personal achievements, we inspire our students to reach their full potential and become well-rounded individuals

Children are valued

Botanic PS can be described as 'naturally integrated' with our school community representing a range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. **We foster a welcoming ethos where everyone is valued. Mutual respect is paramount at all levels of our school community. Botanic Primary is a 'Controlled School.'**

Mission Statement

With our school ethos at heart, it is our aim at Botanic Primary that our children:

- **Delight in effort**
- **Delight in achievement**

- **Delight in respect**

Introduction

This policy is central to the school's purpose as a place of learning. It reflects our shared values and our aspirations for all members of the school community in their capacity as lifelong learners.

Definition of Learning

At Botanic Primary School, we define learning as:

- The process of building new concepts, knowledge, skills, attributes and behaviours through thought, experience and shared communications
- The development of personal characteristics
- Making sense of the world around us and discovering where we fit into it
- A continuous, lifelong process of personal development.

Principles of Effective Learning

We believe that children learn best when:

- They feel happy, comfortable and safe
- Their confidence and self-esteem are high and they enjoy positive, trusting relationships with adults and peers
- They are challenged, encouraged and supported by peers and adults, including family
- The learning environment is stimulating and properly resourced
- Teaching is purposeful, positive, well-paced, varied and stimulating
- Our teaching takes account of their individual needs and interests

Strategies used to Promote Effective Learning

To help children feel happy, comfortable and safe, we will:

- Implement appropriate induction and transition arrangements
- Smile at them, greet them and ask about their welfare
- Make time to listen to what they say
- Show them that we work closely with their families in support of their welfare and education
- Treat them fairly and consistently
- Rigorously implement equal opportunity, anti-bullying and race equality policies
- Ensure that the school is visually attractive and welcoming
- Ensure that they feel 'ownership' through personal spaces, name tags, responsibilities etc.
- Provide opportunities for physical movement in learning activities
- Provide opportunities for relaxation/energizing in and between activities

To help build children's confidence and self-esteem and to enable them to develop positive, trusting relationships with adults and peers, we will:

- Give them opportunities to take part in circle time, role play, show and tell, class assemblies, school council, Eco committee

- Make use of learning/talking partners, peer assessment and collaborative working
- Use a range of reward systems
- Display their work and help them to display their own work attractively
- Look for opportunities to catch them doing well and give praise
- Give constructive feedback verbally and in writing.
- Use positive language and encourage them to do the same
- Acknowledge and celebrate special days, including birthdays where appropriate
- Talk to them about their own lives, hobbies, interests and cultural background
- Celebrate variety in culture, religion and language
- Show respect for them and their contributions
- Have clear rules and routines for behavior in classrooms, and take responsibility for promoting good and courteous behavior both in classrooms and around the school.

To ensure that children are challenged, encouraged and supported by peers and adults, including family, we will:

- Inform parents about the curriculum
- Communicate regularly with parents about progress- a parent- teacher communication (generally an interview) annually around October and, as circumstances permit, the option of a second communication during January/February. The annual written report is issued in June.
- Communicate to children's families that we value their contribution
- Set homework appropriate to their age and ability
- Involve them in self-assessment and the identification of appropriate new targets
- Involve them in collaborative working
- Involve them in peer assessment
- Use target setting information and other assessment procedures eg. PTM, PTE and NRIT etc. to track their progress and identify their learning needs
- Enable them to share achievements through displays, assemblies etc.
- Provide a range of extra-curricular activities - where possible and as appropriate

To ensure the learning environment is stimulating and properly resourced, we will:

- Ensure that classrooms are safe, tidy and free of clutter
- Have appropriate resources according to the varying needs of the pupils
- Ensure that resources are accessible to pupils
- Vary the learning environment, using outdoor visits and educational visits
- Set out informative, interactive and celebratory displays
- Pupils have the opportunity to learn in different ways: group work, pair work, independent work, investigation and problem solving

To ensure that teaching is purposeful, positive, well-paced, varied and stimulating, we will:

- Have high expectations which are relevant for each pupil
- Provide a broad and inspiring curriculum
- Look for every opportunity to identify success
- Fully implement the SEND (under revision) and G&T policies
- Monitor the effectiveness of our teaching through line management and coordinator arrangements, including lesson observations
- Show enthusiasm, motivation and imagination in planning and teaching

To ensure that our teaching takes account of their individual needs and interests, we will:

- Use data and knowledge of pupil's ability to plan for all pupils to take into consideration Newcomers, Special Educational Needs and Gifted and Talented etc.
- Monitor pupils' progress and SEN targets and adjust where necessary.
- Assess for learning on an ongoing basis. Listening, observing and questioning groups carefully
- Know when and how to differentiate appropriately, using approaches which enable pupils to be taught effectively

Lesson elements

- ✧ Learning Intentions
- ✧ Success Criteria
- ✧ Starter
- ✧ Challenge
- ✧ Impact
- ✧ Pace
- ✧ Role modeling
- ✧ Engagement
- ✧ Higher order questioning
- ✧ Differentiation
- ✧ Assessment
- ✧ Plenary- mini plenaries may happen through the lesson
- ✧ Feedback

Feedback

The importance of providing effective feedback continues to be a feature particularly of Botanic Primary School. With our very varied socio-economic and traditional cultural intake, children's behaviour needs to be constantly affirmed in a variety of ways to enable them to benefit from the creation of a focused learning environment that ultimately proves mutually beneficial to all.

In the learning environment they must experience a sense of ownership of their own learning and this is achieved through sharing with them, and ultimately creating the environment where they will craft learning intentions that provide challenging, but achievable targets. In such a situation, they can monitor their own

performance and / or receive effective feedback on progress towards clearly specified and agreed goals.

Teachers (and where appropriate peers) are crucial to the learning process in providing effective feedback within the framework outlined. This feedback must take into account a baselined position relating to previous learning / performance, take cognizance of expected standards or perceived 'norms' and provide evidence of success or failure. It can take many and varied forms – verbal or written (including signs to express same).

Crucially, effective feedback provides the platform from which to jump to the next task / challenge. It allows pupils to take ownership of their own learning by enabling them to perform a type of self-regulation – and gives them the chance to recognise when they have not understood, partially understood or fully understood a task. This is clearly enunciated by John Hattie in what he describes as 'Visible Learning' by teachers who are required to provide feedback on what he describes as the task, process and self regulation. Further information – 'Visible Learning for Teachers,' John Hattie 2012 [Copy in staff room.]

Planning

Medium term planning occurs on a half-termly basis and the relevant coordinators monitor these. Teachers reflect on their own planning and evaluate effectiveness on an ongoing basis.

Lessons are planned with pupils' standardised test data taken into consideration and a wide range of teaching strategies incorporated.

Classroom Assistants

Classroom Assistants are a valuable resource in our school. They support the pupils and the teacher and participate in planning and evaluations.

Homework- see homework policy

Homework will be meaningful and it will extend the learning opportunities achieved within school. It should not contain concepts not covered in class.

Beginning Teachers

Each new teacher is given a copy of the Teachers' handbook. Beginning Teachers are encouraged to attend courses and to observe and discuss with other teachers.

Staff Development

Staff at Botanic Primary School are encouraged to attend courses to benefit them in their professional development. All teachers participate in PRSD after EPD2 is completed. In service training is provided by subject coordinators and Senior Leadership Team. Coordinator and Peer observations throughout the year help teachers review their own teaching performance.

Review

We acknowledge that this policy and our understanding of learning needs to be reflective and open to new research in order for our teaching to be successful. This policy will be reviewed during 2025 and any suggested amendments will be presented to the Board of Governors.

See also: Assessment Policy

Marking Policy

Beginning Teacher Policy

SEN Policy

PRSD Policy

Positive Behaviour Policy

Pastoral Care Policy

Together Towards Improvement

The Reflective Practitioner