

Gladstone Primary School
Teaching and Learning Policy

Introduction

At Gladstone Primary School we believe that everyone is a lifelong learner – pupils and adults alike. Learning should be a rewarding and an enjoyable experience for everyone, with wellbeing and fun at its core. Learning should take place in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance and respect, in which all learners feel valued as individuals and are actively involved in the learning process. Through our approach to teaching we aim to equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to enable them to be able to make informed choices about significant aspects of their lives. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to go on to lead happy and rewarding lives.

Equalities

Every child at Gladstone, whatever their race, creed, gender or disability will have access to the curriculum at a level appropriate to their individual needs and stage of development, in order that they may experience success and satisfaction through their participation in the learning process.

Aims

We ensure that all pupils receive a wide range of the highest quality learning and teaching experiences during their time at Gladstone Primary School. We are aware of the recommendations contained within the Donaldson review and the national intention to develop a revised curriculum based upon the four key purposes contained within the ‘Successful Futures’ document, namely to develop children as ambitious, capable learners, enterprising creative contributors, ethical, informed citizens and healthy, confident individuals. We are beginning to look at what this may mean for our pupils and how we may use them to shape learning experiences

Through our teaching we aim to:

- Provide rich, meaningful, appropriate learning experiences which engage, inspire, support and challenge all learners
- Enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners

- Develop learning skills and provide opportunities to practise and refine them
- Differentiate effectively to meet the learning needs of individuals through the use of resources, support, time and activity
- Embrace new technologies and local and national initiatives
- Foster children's confidence and self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with other people
- Encourage and respond to pupil voice
- Collaborate with others to develop a rich learning community
- Develop children's self-respect and encourage children to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others
- Show respect for all cultures and, in doing so, to promote positive attitudes towards other people
- Enable children to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this community
- Help children grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens

Effective learning

At Gladstone we acknowledge that people learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to develop strategies that allow all pupils to learn in ways that best suit them. Lessons cater for and include a range of learning styles – audio, visual, kinaesthetic, and staff are aware that most learners draw from a combination of styles.

Thinking skills are developed across the curriculum and we offer opportunities for children to learn in a range of ways. These include:

- Investigation and problem solving
- Research and finding out
- Group work – collaborative and cooperative
- A balance of pair, independent, group and whole class work
- Asking and answering rich questions
- Use of digital technologies
- Fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest
- Creative activities
- Debates, role-playing and oral presentations
- Participation in physical activity

At Gladstone we use the Cornerstones Imaginative Learning Project (ILP) programme to teach the foundation subjects and areas of learning. Cornerstones comprises of four distinct stages of learning which actively promote children's learning and thinking and form the basis of each ILP.

Engage - Develop - Innovate - Express

The learning stages are flexible and we adapt them according to class needs.

Each ILP begins with a memorable experience to stimulate the children's curiosity and enthusiasm for a new theme. Our experiences sometimes involve an educational visit or inviting an expert into the classroom. The teacher tailors the memorable experience to the children's interests. We also adapt them to make the most of local places, venues and resources.

In the Engage stage, children:

- Take an active part in memorable first-hand experiences
- Begin to read and research about their new theme using a range of source materials
- Ask their own enquiry questions
- Talk about and explore new ideas
- Develop spoken language skills in different situations and with a range of people
- Take part in sensory activities
- Identify possibilities for future learning

In the Develop stage, children:

- Delve more deeply into a theme
- Develop an understanding of new concepts and skills
- Acquire new knowledge
- Practise and mastering new skills
- Make links between subjects across the curriculum
- Re-visit previously learned skills
- Compose, explore, make, do, build and investigate
- Use transferable skills in different subjects and contexts
- Read and write for different purposes and audiences
- Find answers to their own questions and those asked by others
- Follow pathways of enquiry based on their own interests
- Explain and describe their learning and understanding

The Innovate stage of an ILP poses a thematic problem, challenge, provocation or scenario that requires children to think creatively whilst applying, reflecting and revisiting what they have learnt in previous stages, in a real-life or imaginary context.

In the Innovate stage, children:

- Apply skills, knowledge and understanding to real-life and imaginary contexts
- Show enterprise in solving problems and resolving situations
- Use their thinking skills to explore possibilities
- Build their self-esteem and confidence
- Reflect upon and identifying their own needs, skills and understanding
- Work in pairs, groups, as a whole class and independently
- Take on different roles and responsibilities.

At the Express stage, children:

- Perform, present and become the experts
- Evaluate finished products, processes and progress
- Link what they have learnt to starting points or initial observations
- Reflect on their own learning
- Share their achievements with parents, classmates, the community and beyond
- Celebrate their achievements

At Gladstone we encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. We want them to be involved in the learning process through:

- Opportunities to initiate and influence learning and aspects of school life eg. through the 11 different school councils and ultimately the Gladstone Senedd; pupil judgements of teaching through observing lessons; pupils impacting on their future learning through weekly discussions with their class teacher
- Celebrating children's attitudes and efforts
- Recognising and celebrating children's achievements in all areas of life.
- An Assessment for Learning (AfL) approach including:
 - ✓ Effective questioning
 - ✓ Thinking time
 - ✓ Shared learning objectives and clear success criteria where possible devised by the children
 - ✓ Modelling of work and activities
 - ✓ Self and peer assessment
 - ✓ High quality teacher feedback
 - ✓ Reviewing the way they learn
 - ✓ Reflecting on how they learn

We believe that children learn when learning and teaching is relevant to their lives in the wider community. In Gladstone you will see:

- Members of the local and wider community engaging in school life eg parent readers, craft activities within our Cwtch, cooking sessions
- Celebrations of national and international events eg. World Book Day, Children in Need, St David's Day
- Ex pupils and parents helping with our extensive programme of extra-curricular activities
- Regular visits within the local area and further afield
- Partnership between our Reception children and Golau Caredig
- Links with the local business community eg. Asda, charities eg. Moto in the Community Trust and cultural organisations eg. Cowbridge Music Festival

Effective Teaching

- When teaching we focus on motivating the children and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. We use the statutory curriculum to plan a range of appropriate activities to stimulate children's learning.
- We base our teaching on our knowledge of the pupil's stages of development and level of attainment. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge and skills of the pupils. With Foundation Phase pupils experiential learning is a high priority along with continuous and enhanced provision with easily accessible, stimulating resources to ensure active engagement.
- Teachers plan their lessons with clearly identified learning objectives and success criteria. We strive to ensure that all tasks set, are appropriate to each child's level of ability and differentiated effectively. When planning work for children with Additional Learning Needs, including those who are more able and talented, we give due regard to information and targets contained in the children's Individual Educational Plans (IEPs). We have high expectations of all children and we believe that their learning here at Gladstone is of the highest possible standard.
- We set realistic yet challenging targets for each child for end of Key Stage attainment in the core Areas of Learning (FP) and National Curriculum subjects (KS2) each year. These targets are used to set annual targets. The progress of

each child in relation to their targets is monitored each term during a termly progress meeting with class teachers and the SLT. The target setting process involves all teaching staff, Headteacher and SLT, Standards Committee of the Governing Body and Challenge Advisor. National Test Data, Fischer Family Trust data, teacher assessment and current attainment is taken into account along with historic progress within our school.

- All Gladstone staff strive to establish positive working relationships with all pupils. As a Values School, all staff model good values with the expectation that the children will reciprocate. We are fair and treat all pupils with kindness and respect. All staff follow our Behaviour Policy.
- We ensure that all tasks and activities are safe. When we plan to take children out of school, parents are informed and risk assessments are always completed using the Evolve online programme.
- We deploy Learning Support Assistants and other adult helpers effectively. Sometimes they work with individual pupils on specific interventions or within a small group.
- Our classrooms are stimulating learning environments. The classrooms reflect the projects studied by the children and displays may be informative, enquiring or a celebration of pupils' learning. All classrooms have a range of dictionaries, thesauruses and reading material as well as displays relating to literacy and numeracy. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning and an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources and high- quality learning by the children.
- All our teachers reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and plan their professional development needs accordingly in line with school targets. We do all we can to support our teachers in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice.
- We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all – staff modelling these qualities to pupils at all times.

Resources

We have invested heavily in resources to support teaching and learning, ensuring all pupils have access to:-

- individual wipe boards for mental warm ups, jottings, shared writing etc.
- class easel boards for the teaching of the whole class or groups
- interactive teaching boards for audio, visual and kinaesthetic classroom learning.
- wireless internet connection in all classes
- Ipad and laptops available to each year group as well as the newly refurbished ICT suite
- Suitable classroom age appropriate furniture for group learning
- Resources to support outdoor learning at both the Foundation Phase and KS2
- Indoor resources to facilitate the Foundation Phase experiential curriculum
- All teachers have iPads to support their planning, preparation, teaching and assessment.
- Planning Preparation and Assessment (PPA) rooms are available with internet access for staff to have a quiet place in which to work during non-contact time.

The Role of the Headteacher and Governors

Our Governors together with the Headteacher play a key role in supporting, monitoring and reviewing school policies. The Governors ensure the school premises are a safe, secure and appropriate environment for effective teaching and learning to take place. They monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the school self-review processes.

The Role of Parents and Carers

At Gladstone we believe that parents and carers have a fundamental role to play in helping their children to learn. We do all we can to inform parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- Holding 'Meet the Teacher' sessions at the end of the school year so parents have the chance to meet their child's new teacher before the summer holiday
- Holding 'Sharing Days' twice yearly for children to share their books and learning with their parents and grandparents
- Holding parent consultations twice yearly to focus on individual pupil progress

- Outlining the topics that the children will be studying at regular intervals on the school website
- Sending reports to parents in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can improve further;
- Offering a wellbeing phone hotline if parents have any concerns over their child's general well-being
- Operating an open door policy so parents and carers are welcomed into school to discuss any matters of concern or queries

We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We 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 (all labelled)
- 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 a child's performance or behaviour at school
- read, accept and sign the e-safety acceptable use agreement with their child
- promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general

Monitoring and review

We are aware of the need to review the school teaching and learning policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school.

Date of next review: Spring 2019

