**St John’s Primary Hamilton**

**Teaching & Learning Policy**

This policy outlines our aims, which underpin all Learning and Teaching.

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**Aims:**

* To ensure all children and staff feel happy, safe, respected and included.
* To ensure high quality teaching delivered by enthusiastic, highly motivated and reflective staff, which enables the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding creating the foundations for future learning.
* To set high expectations for all pupils in order to raise their aspirations / attainment.
* To promote, facilitate and enable the inclusion of children facing barriers to learning.
* To provide a broad and balanced curriculum which provides equity for all pupils to acquire knowledge and experiences through variation and differentiation.
* To promote a wide range of enrichment experiences which enable children to make connections between all forms of learning.
* To develop lively and enquiring minds through encouraging children to question and discuss issues, in order to make informed decisions.
* To promote positive attitudes, good behaviour and make connections with our Rights Respecting School Programme while taking into account diversity and developing the social skills required to be an effective member of society.
* To ensure that the highest standards of pastoral care and child protection procedures are in place.
* To develop personal qualities such as self-confidence, independence and self-discipline through praise and positive reinforcement taking into account both class charters and whole school charters in line with the UNCRC.
* To foster, value and encourage strong partnership between school, parents, families and the community.

**School Values**

All stakeholders model our values in and out of the classrooms.

Our school values are displayed on the notice board in the front entrance and are built upon the word RESPECT. These are discussed at Assembly and as part of the whole school house system; a different value is explored each week.

**Teacher’s role:**

* Teachers will have positive home school links.
* Teachers have high expectations of themselves and all pupils, developing a positive attitude, knowing their children and families well.
* Teachers will establish good relationships with children and families to ensure that all are secure in seeking advice and support for children’s learning.
* Teachers will systematically check understanding, intervening when needed.
* Children will be challenged and individual needs met.
* Teachers plan appropriately for all groups of children and access high quality resources.
* Each key lesson has a clear Learning Intention which is communicated effectively to children.
* Each key lesson has a clear success criteria which is communicated effectively to children.
* Lessons demonstrate key elements of good AiFL practice.
* Activities are varied and differentiated to ensure that children explore, develop and

practise new skills/ concepts.

* A range of different teaching strategies are employed over a day to engage, motivate and enthuse learners, utilising a range of higher order thinking skills, in line with their class charter and school charters ensuring everyone’s rights are upheld.
* Teachers provide appropriate resources which support learning outcomes and ensure challenge for the more able.
* Teachers have high expectations of presentation, quality and quantity of work.
* Teachers will ensure that work is accurately corrected and high quality feedback is provided on a regular basis.
* Lessons are carefully planned to be interactive and active and take into account pupil’s interests and needs.
* Teachers encourage children to ask questions, take risks, knowing that mistakes and failures are acknowledged as part of the learning process.
* An element of choice is built into lessons for pupils to make choices about their own learning.
* Teachers create a purposeful, supportive and safe environment where all activities are inclusive.

**Support Assistant’s Role:**

* Support the teacher in providing quality lessons / activities
* Promote playground charter and encourage children to be safe in all interactions
* Encourage children to take responsibility for actions and help child to attempt to resolve problems independently
* Communicate effectively with all members of staff and pupils.

**Learner’s Role:**

* Children have a vital role to play in the learning process and are encouraged to set personal goals and targets.
* Children will behave in a way which allows everyone to learn and feel safe in and out of the classroom.
* Children will have appropriate materials for each lesson/activity.
* Children will be aware that there are different ways to learn and use this knowledge to produce high quality work.
* Children will persevere and remain focused on set tasks.
* Children will engage in a range of activities, sharing ideas, taking chances and work co-operatively to contribute effectively and to respect and listen to each other’s views and opinions.

**Parent’s Role:**

* Ensure children attend school regularly and punctually.
* Ensure children arrive at school fit, ready to learn with the appropriate resources.
* Inform teachers of relevant changes and respond appropriately to home/school communications.
* Support and promote the school ethos and values.
* Encourage their child to accept responsibility for their actions.
* Work with teachers and outside agencies to meet children’s needs.
* Celebrate child’s achievements.
* Encourage child with homework/project work when required.

**Quality Learning:**

* When children are captivated and enthused by what they are learning.
* Children are actively engaged.
* Linked to prior knowledge.
* Supported by both the teacher and other children, and takes the form of interaction, collaboration and adult intervention / facilitation.
* Collaborative through co-operation, dialogue and creating knowledge with others.
* Centred on the children’s responsibility for their own learning. They are able to exercise choice, develop goals, plan their approach and work independently.
* Reflective and enables learners to monitor and review the learning.
* Where children make considerably better progress than may be expected.
* When children display a strong desire to contribute the effort and concentration required to match that of the teachers.
* Evaluate learning, set target, plan approach and work independently.

**Quality Teaching:**

* Provides carefully structured activities matched sensitively to meet children’s needs.
* Gives children some responsibility for their work and to foster independence.
* Develops well planned, prepared and paced lessons that maintain high levels of engagement.
* Teachers provide ample, challenging work stemming from their knowledge of the curriculum, including how to teach it and how children learn.
* Maintains high levels of child involvement in tasks.
* Creates a positive atmosphere in the classroom through excellent relationships.
* Incorporates high levels of praise and encouragement.
* Uses a variety of approaches; well selected strategies, techniques, time management and timescales.
* Uses homework effectively, particularly to consolidate / reinforce and extend what is learned in school.

**Learning and Teaching Strategies**

We acknowledge that children learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to develop strategies that allow them to learn in ways that best suit them.

We offer opportunities for pupils to learn in different ways. These include:

* Whole class work
* Group work
* Paired Work
* Independent Work
* Sharing Learning Intentions and developing success criteria in conjunction with the pupils
* Circle Time
* Use of ICT
* Reflection on what has been learnt
* Open-ended, thought –provoking and challenging questions
* Decision Making
* Investigation and problem solving
* Creative Activities
* Participation in Physical Activity
* Designing and making things
* Discussions, debates, role plays and presentation
* Good balance of practical, written and oral work
* AiFL tools used for peer and self-assessment
* Reflect on effectiveness of strategies used

**Elements of Good Practice**

Lessons should contain the following elements listed below in some shape or form. They are the strategies formulated with staff as being most important to enable us to consistently deliver high quality lessons.

**Learning Objectives are Identified and Shared**

This needs to be a two-step approach in which children are told not only the purpose of the lesson but also what the teacher expects in terms of outcomes from the activity. There is a need to communicate why they are doing what they are doing and how it fits into the bigger picture of the subject or their wider learning across the curriculum.

**This can be achieved through:**

* The learning intention being outlined to the children at or near to the beginning of the lesson.
* The children being clear about the learning intention in terms of what they are expected to learn.
* Children could create their own success criteria.

**Review Learning to Link and Consolidate**

Review helps create links with previous learning. This helps build secure foundations for subsequent learning, so that learners can progressively develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, attitudes and values contained in the curriculum.

**This can be achieved through:**

* Previous learning being recapped by the teacher.
* Children being involved in the recap of previous learning.
* Recap of learning being done throughout the lesson in relation to learning objectives. Establishing what children know, understand, can do, are aware of or have explored, correcting existing misconceptions where necessary.
* Review of learning done towards the end of the lesson to consolidate learning and its retention (plenary).
* Providing time for reviewing and reflecting upon the learning that has taken place, as well as how and why they have learned.

**Variety of Learning Activity**

Lessons should stimulate learning through matching teaching techniques and strategies to the range of learning styles and needs within your class, such as visual, auditory or kinaesthetic learners.

Positive behaviour management and encouragement should be adopted by all. We provide opportunities for children to show and develop their skills and abilities to work independently and collaboratively.

**This can be achieved through:**

* Being confident, flexible, open-minded, willing to experiment and embrace change in terms of your own teaching style, and adapt appropriately.
* Planning and delivering a range of varied activities that match the maturity of the learners and the material to be learned, reflect different learning preferences and involve thinking time.
* Using creativity and imagination, and the resources offered by new technology, to engage, enthuse, challenge and support children, and reward their effort and achievement.
* Engaging in a dialogue with children that centres on effective learning and how they can improve.
* The children being aware of the timing in the lesson and of the longer-term deadlines.
* Assessment having informed which activities are selected and how the children are grouped for them.
* Children being involved in planning, developing and evaluating their own activity and learning experiences.
* Tasks which allow for appropriate variation in the pace of learning, and the level of challenge.

**Differentiation to enable all children to succeed**

Differentiation can be seen as an on-going process that accommodates the needs of individual children in our school. It ensures that teaching allows children to make at least their expected progress in relation to their capability. Differentiation is best achieved when based upon an informed review of the child’s learning, through a diagnostic and formative assessment procedure.

To facilitate differentiation, modifications, adjustments and alterations can be made in the following areas:-

* Learning tasks and activities
* Teaching and learning methodologies.

These modifications are made at the short term planning stage where the decisions about differentiation are informed by assessment.

This might be achieved:

a. **by TASK:**

A range of tasks spanning the spectrum of abilities can be an effective way of differentiating.

b. **by RESOURCE:**

Changing the resources by which pupils learn to meet their individual needs.

c. **by RESPONSE:**

The response of the teacher/adult/ child is a form by which differentiation can be achieved. This is essential in cases where differentiation by outcome is planned as the teacher’s written or spoken response will vary from child to child.

d. **by OUTCOME**:

Children working on a common un-differentiated task will inevitably produce different outcomes to the task set.

e. **by GROUP:**

Differentiation by group is an important way to allow purposeful use of resources (including the other children in the group). Children could belong to semi-permanent groups within the larger teaching groups.

f. **by SUPPORT:**

Differing children’s needs will mean that some children need greater support than others. There are a number of adults who can provide this support, e.g. School Support Assistants, student teachers, volunteers, parent helpers.

These adults support the teaching in the classroom to meet the needs of each individual, from children with barriers to learning to the very able child, and as a result create a culture of respect for others and their learning, whatever their gender, social background or ethnic group. We expect to see a number of these different forms of differentiation over a period of time.

* Planning and delivering a range of varied activities that match the maturity of the children and the material to be learned, reflect different learning preferences and involve thinking time.
* Using creativity and imagination, and the resources offered by new technology, to engage, enthuse, challenge and support children, and reward their effort and achievement.
* Engaging in a dialogue with children that centres on effective learning and how they can improve.
* The children being aware of the timing in the lesson and of the longer-term deadlines.
* Assessment having informed which activities are selected and how the children are grouped for them.
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**Assessment Strategies:**

The key focus of assessment in learning and teaching must be to enable children to be continually aware of where they are now in their learning, where they can or need to get to, and most importantly how best to get there.

* Assessment is an integral part of planning, learning and teaching and helps children know how to improve.
* Teachers employ a wide range of assessment strategies, including observations, discussions with children, marking and written tests.
* All assessment tasks have clearly identified purposes which are understood by the children.
* Assessment criteria are shared with the children, so that the children have a clear sense of what the teacher expects of them.
* The children’s work is marked regularly and highlights strengths and areas for development.
* Children understand that the teacher’s marking is linked to learning intentions and success criteria.
* Children are encouraged to reflect on their current performance and what they need to do next to improve so that they are actively involved in the learning process.
* Children are given time to make improvements to their work using self and peer assessment strategies.
* Encouragement is given to promote improvement and praise is given regularly to encourage children. It recognises progress from children’s previous best.
* Responses from children are welcome.
* Teachers encourage self–assessment strategies, thus encouraging children to become more responsible for their own learning.
* Summative assessments are carried out annually and the data is used to identify progress or under-achievement.

Assessment is of prime importance to teachers to inform their future planning and classroom practice. We must recognise equally that it has a profound influence on child motivation and self-esteem. Therefore it must show consideration and be both constructive and sensitive. Also our ability to share this information with parents effectively is key to children being supported as well as possible at home.

**Learning Environment:**

Climate, Relationships and Resources

* Challenging stimulating, colourful.
* Peaceful, calm and comfortable.
* Happy caring and supportive.
* Contributions by the children are valued and respected by teachers and other children.
* Children’s work is on display in the corridors and classrooms.
* These displays support children’s learning and are changed regularly.
* They create an attractive and stimulating environment.
* They include work on different aspects of the curriculum.
* They reflect the individual child’s efforts as well as ability.
* Class Charters are displayed in each class clearly linked to the UNCRC and signed by both adults and children in the room.
* Children understand teachers’ expectations for work, behaviour etc.
* Suitable reward system in place
* Teachers encourage high levels of self-esteem
* Children make use of water bottles

**Physical Organisation**

**Furniture**

All classrooms should have tables arranged for:

* Ease of working
* Flexibility
* Purposeful discussion
* Large working surfaces

Chairs should normally:

* Be sufficient in number for the activities in the classroom
* Leave enough room for children and teachers to move easily around the room

**Resources**

Materials in all areas should be well organised, be of good quality, be clean, tidy, attractive, and well labelled. Stocks should be checked and replenished regularly (budget dependent). Children should be taught and shown, by example, that resources are finite and that we all have a duty to care for equipment and not misuse, damage or waste it. Relevant textbooks should be available in each classroom or resource area.

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