

PENS MEADOW SCHOOL

EYFS LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY

Date of Policy: November 2016

Policy review date: September 2018

Policy Next Review Date: September 2017

Member of staff responsible: TLR Primary

Rationale

This policy is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for learning and teaching at Pens Meadow School. It is essential that the learning experiences offered to the pupils is of the highest standard in order to meet the requirements of the new National Curriculum (September 2014), OFSTED and Accreditation by Awarding Bodies. This policy aims to ensure that the curriculum offered by Pens Meadow is broad, balanced and relevant to the individual needs of our school population.

Aims

- To achieve the highest standards possible through effective learning and high quality teaching, that allows for challenge and progression
- To provide learning opportunities that allow each pupil to achieve his or her full potential through sharing, valuing, working as a team member and being stimulated by curriculum activities
- To facilitate communication through a range of appropriate modes
- To enable pupils to express preferences, communicate their needs and to make choices which are acted upon
- To develop foundational learning skills that will empower pupils to access their learning both in the short term and as they move through their school careers and beyond
- To promote and develop children's characteristics of effective learning, giving them tools to engage with and extend their learning in a range of stimulating, play based learning activities
- To promote personal, social and thinking skills
- To work with specialist agencies to facilitate the learning of all pupils at Pens Meadow School
- To personalise the curriculum and to address the principles of Every Child Matters Agenda
- To ensure that pupils understand their individual learning objectives and know what they need to do to improve and advance onto their next steps in learning (where appropriate)

Supporting documents and policies

- The School Prospectus
- EYFS/Primary Curriculum Map
- Pens Meadow Small Steps document
- Whole School Policies: Appraisal; Monitoring and Assessment; Marking and Annotation
- Home/School Agreement
- School Improvement Plan

Responsibilities

School Community

It is the responsibility of all members of the school community to implement this policy to ensure a consistent approach to learning. At Pens Meadow School we respect the rights of individuals, their values and beliefs. We recognise the importance of different cultures, heritages and diversity. This policy is in line with Pens Meadow School's Equal Opportunities Policy.

Pupils

It is the pupils' responsibility to:

- Take responsibility for their own learning as far as they are able
- Show a caring and courteous attitude towards others in the school community
- Follow the school code of conduct

Staff

It is the staff members' responsibility to:

- Help to establish links with parents and the wider community to enable the school to prepare all pupils for the opportunities and experiences of adult life
- Be a good role model, punctual, courteous, well-prepared and organised
- Have a positive attitude to the school community and to their own professional development
- Recognise the academic and pastoral needs of each pupil
- Provide a challenging and stimulating curriculum designed to enable all pupils to reach the highest standards of personal achievement
- Maintain an up-to-date knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage profile and Early Learning Goals
- Make best use of analysed data to inform learning, teaching and tracking progress
- Report to parents, staff, senior managers and Governors when required to do so
- Maintain professional attitudes towards the school policies and school code of conduct
- Respect all attempts at communication in whatever mode a pupil chooses to use and to respond appropriately in a Total Communication environment

Parents and Carers

- To support their child by taking an active interest in their learning
- To support I.E.P. and EHCP targets and reinforce their child's learning in different environments
- To ensure that pupils attend school and wear school uniform where required
- To support the school in achieving high standards
- To encourage their child to engage with learning at home and within the community

The Learning Environment

At Pens Meadow School we recognise that learning takes place in a variety of ways and in different environments. Cross-curricular and incidental learning is encouraged, evidenced and celebrated. Community visits allow pupils to practise and apply their learning in real world contexts.

Within classrooms the room layout should:

- reflect the needs and learning styles of all pupils
- support the schools Total Communication ethos
- support classroom routines, expectations and the school code of conduct
- encourage independence and problem solving
- be tidy, organised and well resourced

The atmosphere within the learning environment should:

- be positive, stimulating, nurturing, welcoming and secure
- reflect the school behaviour policy and individual behaviour management strategies
- nurture mutual respect for all members of the class and school
- celebrate success

Curriculum Content

Pens Meadow School recognises that all learners have an entitlement to a broad, balanced curriculum appropriate to their needs. The EYFS curriculum at Pens Meadow follows the statutory framework, it is child-centred and designed around pupils who have a range of complex cognitive difficulties alongside sensory, physical and/or behavioural barriers to learning.

Pupil's well-being, levels of involvement and enjoyment are a vital part of successful curriculum planning.

We recognise that if pupils are going to access academic learning at an appropriate level, then we must ensure that their basic needs are met. Opportunities for pupils to develop their early sensory and perceptual-motor skills must also be included.

The curriculum at Pens Meadow recognises the need to deliver early development opportunities. Sensory, play-based and semi-formal learning is based around a 'Total Communication' approach and incorporates a range of therapies, sensory integration programmes and behaviour management strategies. These are all tailored towards individuals and their next steps.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

Our EYFS classes follow the statutory framework: -

- **Quality and consistency** in all early years' settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind;
- **A secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly;
- **Partnership working** between practitioners and with parents and/or carers;
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

Overarching principles

Four guiding principles should shape practice in early year's settings.

These are:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers; and
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early year's provision, whatever their special educational needs or disabilities.

The seven areas of learning are:

- **Communication and language** development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations. At Pens Meadow this is within a total communication environment.
- **Physical development** involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food. At Pens Meadow this includes enabling and empowering children to be as healthy as they can be utilising a multidisciplinary approach for children with more complex movement needs, including close liaison with physiotherapists.
- **Personal, social and emotional development** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities. At Pens Meadow this is delivered through a range of strategies to promote self-awareness and self-regulation, as well as promoting a sense of community within the classroom and wider school.

- **Literacy** development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest. At Pens Meadow this is based around developing foundational literacy skills, such as fine motor skills, mark making and developing attention skills through a broad range of literary opportunities, tailored to meet individual's needs and interests.
- **Mathematics** involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures. At Pens Meadow we give children a range of mathematical opportunities to develop early mathematical skills, such as awareness of cause and effect, early number awareness and exploring spaces and shapes.
- **Understanding the world** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment. At Pens Meadow we offer our pupils a range of experiences that help them to process and be an active participant in the world around them, including opportunities to understand and celebrate other cultures, religions and traditions. We promote children's understanding of what it is to be safe, both in the world and online in an increasingly digital world.
- **Expressive arts and design** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology. At Pens Meadow our pupils are encouraged to explore, make choices and express preferences through their work, encompassing a wide range of creative media.

Target Setting

All the pupils at Pens Meadow School are working towards pre-national curriculum age expected standards due to the complex nature of their special educational need and disability.

During the EYFS we track our pupils' progress against developmental markers, as outlined in the EYFS profile. We use the Pens Meadow Small steps document to track incremental progress that is substantial for our pupils. This enables us to track their progress and attainment more closely and celebrate their successes.

All pupils will have identified focussed next steps based targets in the 3 core areas - Personal, Social and Emotional development, Communication and Language Development and Physical Development, with an identified focus for both gross and fine motor skills. Evidence towards these next steps is documented in their work books and on the online learning journey, Tapestry. Parents have access to their child's Tapestry profile, to share pupils' successes and maintain an open working relationship between school and home.

Identified, focussed, next steps are set for pupils on an individual basis, every term. Class teachers are expected to monitor their pupils' progress towards these targets, and to highlight any issues where relevant. Progression towards next steps is

reviewed at pupil progress meetings each half term. Where progress is not adequate, interventions are put into place. These can be academic or may address a certain barrier to learning such as behaviour or communication.

Teachers also baseline pupils in relation P Scale descriptors on entry into school. This allows us to track progress across the key stage and set key stage targets accordingly.

Planning

Teachers are responsible for medium and short-term planning. Pens Meadow does not have set planning formats and encourages teachers to plan in a way that supports their teaching style.

Planning should demonstrate challenge and progression, relevant to individual starting points. There is an expectation that each lesson will be focused around a learning question phrased as a 'Can I' statement. Lesson content should be engaging, and promote independence and problem solving. Expected outcomes need to be recorded.

Record keeping and assessment

Frequent observations and assessments are made of pupils work to record progress, establish levels of attainment and inform future planning. Where pupils are developing their skills in a specific area through frequent skills sessions and overlearning, staff will observe pupils frequently and record significant progress in these sessions as appropriate.

Lessons are continually evaluated by class teams and this is reflected in the formative assessment evidence and marking of pupil's work, in line with the agreed marking policy. Teaching assistants are involved by the teacher in the planning process, and in discussion about next steps in learning for each pupil.

Curriculum monitoring, evaluation and development

The overall curriculum is the responsibility of the TLR for Primary, working alongside the Deputy who monitors its delivery and impact. Regular learning walks, book looks and planning trawls enable members of the SLT to monitor provision.

Internal and external moderation exercises help to validate these judgements.

Governors are also invited to make termly classroom visits with an agreed focus.

The Head and Deputy Head teacher are responsible for the professional development needs of all staff as identified by the School Development Plan and Appraisal Cycle.