



Copperfield
Academy

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

APRIL 2014

Copperfield Academy

Teaching and Learning Policy

This policy is the most important of all our school policies. The success of our school and of our pupils is determined by the quality of teaching and learning that takes place. Our role is to guide, inform and enable pupils to learn so that each child can achieve beyond their best.

This policy is designed to support all of us in promoting excellent learning. The principles that underline it are written from the best pedagogical knowledge and current educational research of how children learn best. These principles have the potential to increase the life chances of our pupils by raising the quality of education we provide. They will improve pupil engagement in their learning, enjoyment, relationships and behavior.

Key Principles

1. It is vital that staff have a consistent shared understanding and approach to promoting learning.
2. Formative Assessment as devised by William and Black will form the basis of our approach to outstanding teaching and learning.
3. Teamwork, both between staff and between pupils is key to successful learning.
4. We recognise that there will be barriers to learning for some pupils which may make teaching difficult. However we will overcome these barriers by being ambitious for what can be achieved and optimistic that it will happen.
5. Every pupil in our school has the right to access the very best learning. Our role as professionals is to acknowledge that we are always on a learning journey and we have much to learn from colleagues and professionals. In doing so we acknowledge that our practice can always be improved to provide this very best learning.
6. Our responsibility is to provide the guidance, support and expertise necessary to make learning happen. It is essential that we recognise that 'working' is not necessary 'learning'. We must ensure that 'learning' is always taking place.

Core Principles

In our Mission Statement we aim to provide a 'stimulating learning environment that allows each child to flourish'. It is our aim to guide each pupil to have high aspirations, to strive for their beyond their best so that their life chances are increased, they can be successful, confident and have the skills and attributes to enable them to be effective citizens in an ever-changing world. Therefore our children need to be fully involved in the learning process as active learners who in turn will become life-long learners.

This policy sets out our principles and expectations behind the culture of learning at Copperfield Academy and should be read alongside the policies on Assessment, The Curriculum, Feedback, Presentation and Positive Behaviour.

Growth Mindset attitude

Our school believes in the principle that intelligence is not fixed at birth but intelligence grows with new learning. We support the extensive research by Carol Dweck on the Growth Mindset. Our children are taught this. As such there will be no Ability Groups.

The key difference between a Fixed Mindset attitude and a Growth Mindset attitude is that, with the latter, intelligence is not fixed but is a measure 'of that moment' – hence intelligence can increase if there is new learning. With increased intelligence comes the capacity for higher achievement. Consequently there will be no ability groupings for any subject. Children

will be referred to as High/ Middle or low *Achievers*. The achievement groups will be fluid depending on how well a pupil is achieving in that subject *at that time*.

Principles of Formative Assessment

Dylan Williams and Paul Black pioneered Assessment for Learning and at Copperfield Academy we believe it should be at the heart of the learning process. They set out 5 key principles for embedding formative assessment in lessons:

1. Clarifying and sharing learning intentions that informs pupils where their learning is going.
2. Planning and fostering effective discussions, task and activities that promote high quality learning.
3. Creating effective success criteria that supports learning and aids assessment and feedback.
4. Providing effective feedback to promote learning
5. Promoting pupils as learning partners for each other (Peer mentoring).
6. Facilitating pupils as owners of their own learning.

The Principles of teaching at Copperfield Academy

Following the extensive research of John Hattie we have identified the key elements that promote deep learning and high achievement which, alongside the work of Williams, Black and Shirley Clarke, we adopt as the core principles in teaching and learning at our school.

These strategies form a coherent and co-ordinated approach to how we will teach and the pupils learn. Evidence has shown that if all staff teach following these principles pupils will experience a consistency of practice that will promote high achievement.

Learning intentions, success criteria and the role of feedback

Developing Learning intentions

Every lesson must be planned with a clear learning intention. These intentions should focus on what is to be learned and should not be the task that is to be completed. The task, or context can be included alongside the learning intention but the task cannot solely be the learning intention. For example 'to write an effective story opener using dialogue' combines the learning and the task, whereas 'to write a story' is solely the task without identifying what is to be learned.

Learning intentions where possible should highlight the skill that is to be developed so that pupils can make links across the curriculum, for example 'to speak in complete sentences', 'use capital letters and full stops'. Learning intentions should make a clear distinction between the skills that are being developed and the acquisition of subject knowledge.

Although all lessons must have clear learning intentions how and where these are shared with the children is up to the professional discretion of the teacher. Some investigation or discovery lessons for example may benefit from the learning intention being shared part way or at the end of the lesson. Learning intentions do need to be written and will generally need to be shared several times orally throughout the lesson. It is not expected that pupils spend valuable learning time copying down the whole learning intention. Key words from the learning intention can be underlined and then be written by pupils who are developing or fluent writers. For example 'to write an effective story opener using dialogue' can be transcribed as 'story opener dialogue'. Non-writers or emerging writers can have the learning intention written by an adult or it stuck in their book.

Engineering effective discussions, tasks and activities that lead to learning

In order to learn well it is important that pupils are actively engaged in tasks that stretch and challenge them- that take them to the edge of the next level of learning. In order for this to happen teachers will need to:

- Plan and support effective discussions; careful thought needs to be put into planning the role of talk in the lesson. We will have a 'no-hands up' approach to questioning and answering with enough time for pupils to consider the question and their answer ie; Thinking Time.
Thinking Time is vital to promote effective learning. Teachers must not rush this, rather they must use their professional discretion. Thinking Time should always be given before pupils are asked to share their thoughts with a partner. Partner talk is only a valuable aid to learning when both partners have had time to consider their contribution, then each partner hears the contribution of the other before they decide on a consensus to feedback. Pupils should be asked to summarise the discussion – this can be promoted at a simple level from an early age.
- Plan effective tasks and activities; careful thought needs to be put into planning the work that pupils will do. For example carefully organized group work using Co-operative Learning can ensure that all children are take an active part and are engaged.

Setting Success Criteria

Setting Success Criteria is an essential part of the learning intention setting process. Success Criteria should inform pupils of what they need to do in order to meet the learning intentions. Good success criteria is an essential part of the formative assessment process as it allows pupils to guide their learning and judge how well they are doing. For teachers it shows how well pupils have performed and highlights what they need to do to make progress. As such success criteria then provides the framework for self and peer marking and effective teacher feedback.

The role of Feedback

If pupils are to become independent learners they must be informed about their learning. The teacher's role in this is crucial. By ensuring the pupil has a clear understanding of the learning intentions and the success criteria the teacher can then help guide the pupils thorough the next stage of their learning. High quality feedback alone has been shown to advance learning by as much as 8 months (Sutton Trust). This feedback can take many forms – for example, whole class feedback, a personal discussion or comment written on a piece of learning. This feedback should assess the learning against the learning intention and success criteria but crucially it must provide support on how to make progress. Further guidance on effective feedback can be seen in the school's Feedback Policy.

Supporting pupils to become independent learners

One of our aims is to nurture independent learners who have skills to be successful in a changing world. We are trying to educate children for jobs that have yet to be imagined. To achieve this we need to equip them to be critical and reflective learners.

If pupils are to be successful learners they need to become independent learners over time who take responsibility for their own learning. Too often pupils, especially those who are lower achievers or who have additional educational needs, become too reliant on adults. It is vital that teachers and support staff promote independence through planning learning as to foster Meta-Cognition (known at Copperfield as Learning Powers) and independence in all lessons.

Pupils need to be able to think about the learning process and how to learn successfully. The children will learn about, and become proficient in using, the key Learning Powers (Meta-cognition) identified as the essential skills for success in this changing world. Engaging the pupils in the learning process through sharing the learning intention, employing effective questioning techniques, building success criteria, effective teacher feedback and by giving pupils the opportunity to access their own and others work, supports our aim towards independent learning.

Promoting Independent Learning

If pupils are to be successful learners they need to become independent learners who take responsibility for their own learning over time. Too often pupils, especially those who are lower achievers or who have additional educational needs, become too reliant on adults. It is vital that teachers and support staff promote independence through planning learning as outlined above and fostering inter-personal skills in all lessons.

Questioning

High quality questioning has a vital role to play in deepening understanding in pupils. Conversely low level questioning, such as recalling knowledge, has little impact on deeper learning. At its simplest form teachers will use TED (Tell me.... Explain.... Describe..) but high quality questioning should use Blooms Taxonomy (see appendix).

Effective Planning

If learning is to be outstanding it needs to be carefully planned for;

Lesson plans

Lesson plans at Copperfield Academy must take into account the principles outlined above. Again this consistency of approach will support professionals in delivering high quality lessons and so ensure high quality learning. With this in mind all planning will follow the school lesson plan template. However it is not expected that teachers will adhere to the timings for every lesson but will adjust the timings to suit the learning and the needs of the pupils.

Examples of High Quality questioning needs to be included in the planning although it is accepted that such questioning will also be in response to the pupils' learning during the lesson.

Task design should also be of high quality to ensure deep understanding and high levels of engagement. Blooms Taxonomy should be used to plan tasks which again will promote deeper learning.

Schemes of Work

Copperfield Academy has set schemes of work for each area of the curriculum. Literacy is driven by Read, Write Inc, Language and Literacy, and schemes of work for handwriting and spelling. Mathematics follows the Singapore Math scheme and is supported by the Mathletic IT programme.

The Foundation Subjects are planned through the International Primary Curriculum (IPC). Schemes of work for PSHE and RE are in place.

Learning will be led by these schemes to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum across the whole school as well as to ensure progression from one year group to the next.

Medium and Long Term Plans

Long-term plans are in place for all year groups in every scheme of work. Year groups are expected to follow these and to translate them into medium and then short term plans. A whole school timetable is in place to support coverage of a broad and balanced curriculum.

Seating Plans to support effective learning

Pupils who are ability grouped can have their learning limited. Pupils who are lower achievers have limited scope to aspire higher if they are ability grouped. Ability groups also limit opportunities for pupils to teach each other.

For the majority of teaching, pupils will be in mixed achievement groups. For example around a table of six pupils there will be 2 lower achievers who will sit next to each other, flanked by 2 middle achievers and 2 higher achievers.

Pupils must be challenged to attempt tasks that are at the edge of their next level of learning. Teachers will plan differentiated tasks that challenge all levels of achievement but pupils will decide which task to attempt themselves, in doing so research has shown that children will set a higher level of challenge for themselves.

In mixed achievement groups pupils will have the opportunity to support / teach each other, known as Peer Mentoring. Peer Mentoring as a strategy has been shown to improve performance by 5 months (Sutton Trust). Pupils will need to be taught how to support each other effectively and this will be a teaching focus at the start of each school year and revisited each new term.

Copperfield Academy Pupil and Teacher expectations

Expectations of Pupils

1. Pupils are expected to attend school every day and to be punctual.
2. Pupils are expected to approach their learning with a positive attitude and with enthusiasm.
3. Pupils must always behave in a way that allows themselves and others to learn. This includes listening when others are speaking, taking turns, accepting other pupils' ideas and supporting each other's learning.
4. Pupils must complete their home- work or their home learning projects on time.
5. Pupils should focus on learning and put every effort into their learning.
6. Pupils will respect their learning by organising and presenting their work neatly.
7. Pupils should always be polite and respectful to others.

Expectations of teachers

1. Teachers should have a strong understanding of the principles of good learning and teaching and put these into practice.
2. They must recognise that intelligence is not fixed and so every child can achieve beyond their current capability.
3. Teachers should know their pupils; how they learn best, what motivates them, what barriers they may present to learning and seek ways of overcoming these barriers.
4. Teachers must plan learning that meets the needs of their class. They should aim to plan new learning each lesson or if necessary to consolidate prior learning but at the same time including challenging activities.
5. Teachers should be helpful, supportive but not create a dependable culture. They should be positive towards all pupils, be warm, friendly and welcoming with a good sense of humour. However they must set firm boundaries that promote good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning.
6. Teachers must be consistent in applying all school policies and guidelines.
7. Teachers are expected to be organized and prepared in advance for all lessons.

Learning Powers (Meta-cognition) at Copperfield Academy

We know that if our pupils are to be successfully employed in the future they need a skills base that includes good inter-personal skills, learning skills and thinking skills. They also need to have a positive attitude that they can succeed with time, patience and practice (Growth Mindset). We have adopted the Learning Powers identified by Shirley Clarke to promote these key skills in young children;

1. Concentrate
2. Don't give up
3. Be co-operative
4. Be curious
5. Have a go
6. Use your imagination
7. Keep improving
8. Enjoy learning.

This policy was written in April 2014

Review date; April 2017 or earlier if needed.

Signed ;

Headteacher

Signed:

Teacher