# F:\Harrowbarrow-Logo-Blue-LowRes.jpgHARROWBARROW SCHOOL

Teaching & Learning Policy

Aims

This policy outlines our vision for how children will be educated at Harrowbarrow School. It sets out the agreed elements required to facilitate high quality educational provision which will secure expected learning outcomes and prepare pupils for the next stages of their education and beyond. This policy helps teachers fully understand their role and the impact they can have on the learning of the pupils. We believe the role of teachers is:

* To nurture and challenge children’s intellectual and imaginative capacities through the highest expectations.
* To work with pupils in a caring way, with humanity and sensitivity.
* To maximise their potential for the next stage in their education and life beyond the classroom.

Expert teaching

Expert teachers, as defined by John Hattie in his book Visible Learning for Teachers: Maximising Impact on Learning, are highly proficient at:

* Identifying the most important ways in which to represent the subject they teach.
* Creating an optimal classroom climate for learning.
* Monitoring learning and providing feedback.
* Influencing surface and deep pupil outcomes.

They also believe that every pupil can reach the success criteria; a deficit mindset is an impediment to any child achieving their potential.

These dimensions underpin the agreed approaches, identified within this policy, to help facilitate the expert teaching we aspire to at Harrowbarrow School.

Curriculum Design & Planning

Well considered curriculum content and design does not predetermine expert teaching. This can only be achieved through highly skilled and competent practitioners with the knowledge, understanding and ability to implement pedagogical approaches which will most effectively facilitate deep learning. The direct instruction model of learning, which Adams and Engelmann (1996) advocate, outlines seven major steps which need to be followed to achieve expert teaching:

* Being clear about what the learning intentions are before planning the lesson; what should the pupil be able to do/understand/care about as a result of the lesson?
* Knowing what success looks like; what to expect from pupils and how they will be held accountable for the lesson i.e. how pupils will be informed about the success of their learning.
* Building commitment and engagement in the learning tasks; a ‘hook’ to grab the pupil’s attention such that they share the intention and understand what is meant by success.
* Consideration of how to present the learning most effectively: What will the input look like? How will modelling be used? How would you check for understanding?
* Using guided practice to enable pupils to demonstrate their grasp of new learning by working through an activity or exercise. Teachers can then provide immediate feedback and intervention as needed.
* Planning for closure; using actions or statements which inform pupils of what they have achieved, to consolidate, avoid confusion and frustration and reinforce the key learning points to be learned.
* Independent practice in a new context enables pupils to demonstrate mastery of the concept. For example, transferring inference skills learned in a guided reading lesson within one genre to another, to practice the application in a different context, enables pupils to apply what they have learned.

This pedagogical approach is not influenced by curriculum content and design but is a prerequisite of expert teaching regardless of the curriculum model favoured by the school (see Curriculum Policy).

Metacognition & self-regulation

Expert teachers will recognise the impact metacognition and self-regulation approaches can have on progress in the classroom. The intention is to help pupils think about their own learning more explicitly, often by teaching them specific strategies for planning, monitoring and evaluating their learning. To foster a metacognitive and self-regulatory approach, it is recommended that expert teachers implement the following:

* Ensuring pupils are aware of their strengths and weaknesses, and can motivate themselves to engage in, and improve, their learning.
* Developing pupils’ metacognitive knowledge of how they learn and their knowledge of themselves as a learner, of strategies and of tasks.
* Supporting pupils to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning.
* Explicitly instructing pupils in cognitive and metacognitive strategies to improve pupils’ learning; metacognition shouldn’t be an ‘extra’ task for teachers to do but should be built into their teaching activities.
* A stepped approach to learning, beginning with activating prior knowledge and leading to independent practice before ending in structured reflection.
* Adult modelling which helps reveal the thought processes of an expert learner, developing pupils’ metacognitive skills.
* Adults verbalising their metacognitive thinking (‘What do I know about problems like this? What ways of solving them have I used before?’) as they approach and work through a task.
* Scaffolding tasks, like worked examples, allows pupils to develop their metacognitive and cognitive skills without placing too many demands on their mental resources.
* Challenge, at an appropriate level, which allows pupils to develop and progress their knowledge of tasks, strategies, and of themselves as learners.
* Challenge which does not overload pupils’ cognitive processes, particularly when they are expected to apply new strategies.
* High quality classroom dialogue involving pupil-to-pupil and pupil to teacher talk to build knowledge and understanding of cognitive and metacognitive strategies. Dialogue needs to be purposeful, with teachers guiding and supporting the conversation to ensure it is challenging and builds on prior subject knowledge.
* The explicit development of independent learning skills through carefully designed guided practice, with support gradually withdrawn as the pupil becomes proficient, allowing pupils to develop skills and strategies before applying them in independent practice.
* Timely and effective feedback and strategies to be able to judge accurately how effectively pupils are learning.

Assessment for Learning

Assessment for Learning (AFL) is an approach to teaching and learning that creates feedback which is used to improve pupils’ performance. Pupils become more involved in the learning process and from this gain confidence in what they are expected to learn and to what standard.

One way of thinking about AFL is that it aims to ‘close the gap’ between a learner’s current situation and where they want to be in their learning and achievement. It is expected that expert teachers plan tasks which help learners to do this.

AFL involves students becoming more active in their learning and starting to ‘think like a teacher’. They think more actively about where they are now, where they are going and how to get there.

Expert teachers integrate AFL in their lessons as a natural part of what they do, choosing how much or how little to use the method. AFL can be adapted to suit the age and ability of the learners involved.

When considering using AFL effectively in their lessons it is important that teachers plan for these processes:

* Questioning which enables a pupil, with the help of their teacher, to find out what level they are at.
* Providing feedback to each pupil about how to improve their learning.
* Exemplifying what successful work looks like for each task so that pupils understand what they are trying to achieve.
* Independent learning, where pupils take part in peer and self-assessment.
* Information from summative assessments (e.g. tests) is used formatively to plan for future improvements.

Feedback

The use of effective feedback can have a high impact upon the quality of learning. Feedback provides information to the learner about their performance relative to learning goals or outcomes. It should aim towards (and be capable of producing) improvement in learning. Feedback redirects or refocuses either the teacher’s or the learner’s actions to achieve a goal, by aligning effort and activity with an outcome. It can be about the output of the activity, the process of the activity, the pupil’s management of their learning or self-regulation, or them as individuals (which tends to be the least effective). This feedback can be verbal or written (see Marking and Feedback Policy).

Depth of Learning

Expert teachers strive for pupils to have a deep understanding of the concepts taught which become embedded in their long-term memory and can be transferred to new areas of learning.

Although John Holt’s description of how pupils can demonstrate deep learning, or mastery, refers to learning in maths, it can be argued this is applicable in all subjects and areas of learning.

A pupil really understands a mathematical concept, idea or technique if he or she can:

* describe it in his or her own words
* represent it in a variety of ways
* explain it to someone else
* make up his or her own examples (and non-examples) of it
* see connections between it and other facts or ideas
* recognise it in new situations and contexts
* make use of it in various ways, including in new situations

How Children Fail, John Holt 1964, reproduced by NCETM ‘Teaching for Mastery Questions, tasks and activities to support assessment’2015

Equality of Opportunity

The Equality Act 2010 outlines the general duty upon schools to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity between people and foster good relations across all characteristics; between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. The protected characteristics include race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

All pupils, both those with and without protected characteristics, deserve equal access to high quality educational provision and opportunity, regardless of individual needs and abilities. At Harrowbarrow School we have adopted a fully inclusive approach, where we believe every child has the right to access the same quality of learning provision as their peers. In some situations this requires the school to make adaptions such as:

* Increased levels of support in the classroom, both from adults and use of additional resources.
* Risk assessing activities which present greater risk to some individuals and implementing controls to reduce risk to acceptable levels e.g. providing 1:1 support in the pool for a child with epilepsy. Where levels of risk cannot be adequately reduced alternative arrangements will be sought.
* Alterations to the physical environment of the school building and grounds to enable access.
* More flexible approaches such alternative start times or different transition arrangements.

The school, often with local authority support, is expected to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities.

Summary

We believe all teachers should have a high respect for their pupils and be passionate about all of them achieving success in their learning. They should build trusting relationships with each and every pupil and create a climate where mistakes become the essence of learning. Teachers need to interpret evidence about the effect of their own actions on learning and have the opportunity and support to effect improvement where necessary. Finally, teachers should be highly passionate about how they can make a positive difference in every pupil’s life by recognising what they, as expert teachers, need to do to ensure success for all.

Policy agreed by governors: January 2020

To be reviewed: January 2023