



Teaching and Learning Policy

Designated members of staff: Gary Wright

Chair of Governors: Alison Logan

“The principle goal of education is to create men and women who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what other generations have done.”

Jean Piaget

Enjoy achieving together... by being the best that we can be!

Learning at Usworth Colliery is engaging, excites the learners and teacher, and is about every child making progress every lesson.

We aim to:

- Enable children to become confident, resourceful, creative, enquiring and independent learners.
- Challenge and support children to enable them to take on responsibilities opportunities, and experiences of life, including the essential learning skills in English, Maths & ICT.
- Foster children's self-esteem, help them build positive relationships with other people and raise their aspirations for the future.
- Develop children's self-respect and encourage children to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others.
- Nurture talents, as well as encourage high standards of academic achievement.
- Show respect for all cultures and, in so doing, 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, safe, healthy and positive citizens.
- Promote the 'Every Child Matters' agenda.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Personalised learning is at the heart of effective teaching and learning.

At Usworth Colliery, we recognise the need to develop strategies that will allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them so that they may fulfil their potential. Many learning opportunities are made available to the children that take account of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning styles.

Such opportunities include:

- investigation and problem solving;
- enquiry;
- group work; paired work; independent work; whole-class work;
- asking and answering questions;
- use of ICT;
- visitors and visits
- creative activities;
- debates, role-plays and oral presentations;
- designing and making things;
- participation in physical activity
- outside classroom/environment

We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn – what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn. (AfL)

Effective teaching and learning is characterised by the nine features of Personalised Learning:

1. **High quality teaching and learning**
2. **Target setting and tracking**
3. **Focused assessment**
4. **Intervention**
5. **Pupil grouping**
6. **The learning environment**
7. **Curriculum organisation**
8. **The extended curriculum**
9. **Supporting children's wider needs**

We believe that people learn best in different ways. At Usworth Colliery, we provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows all children to develop their skills and abilities to reach their full potential.

1. 'Quality first' teaching and learning

This is characterised by:

- Highly focused lesson design with sharp objectives
- High expectations of pupil involvement and engagement with their learning
- High levels of interaction for all pupils
- Teacher questioning, modelling and explaining
- An emphasis on learning through dialogue, with regular opportunities for pupils to talk individually and in groups
- An expectation that pupils will accept responsibility for their own learning and work independently
- Praise and encouragement to motivate pupils further

2. Target setting and tracking

- Individual pupils' progress is tracked, together with that of cohorts and specific groups throughout the school. We use a range of performance measures, including teacher assessment (assessment against lesson objectives, APP and against key skills), test results and assessment for learning strategies. Staff collect this data on a termly basis and input the information onto our tracker system. This data is also correlated on Pupil Progress Trackers, which show progress made throughout the year in relation to targets. This information is shared with other teachers/support staff in the year group. It is also monitored by the Senior Leadership Team. Strengths and areas for development are identified to inform planning and to implement intervention programmes as appropriate. This data is also used to set pupil progress targets for individual teacher's appraisal targets. A written analysis is made to use for the School Evaluation Form (SEF) and reports for the School Improvement Partner (SIP).
- Foundation Stage track pupils' progress against the EYFS Development Matters. From their observations they set targets for the pupils in order to challenge and extend their learning. This tracking information is shared with parents at each of the three parents meetings throughout the year, mid-year report, through regular learning log 'looks' and also sharing of observations through the Orbit software.
- Throughout school, progress is also measured for science, ICT and foundation subjects against a progressive key skills list. These cover foundation subject and provide National Curriculum levels. Each child is given a level each term and staff use these assessments to plan for the next term. These levels are tracked and monitored by the curriculum leader.
- The whole school work on curricular layered targets based upon areas the whole school need to develop. These areas from improvement come from data analysis and monitoring. Each child has reading, writing and Maths targets linked directly to the National Curriculum sub-level they are working towards. They are given the opportunity to practice/achieve these targets continually throughout each week and at home. These targets are changed regularly when the child has achieved the level.
- Pupil voice is central to the review of their performance and target setting.
- Parents/carers receive regular updates on their child's progress both formally (at each of the three parent meetings every year and two annual reports) and informally, so that they can provide support/encouragement as appropriate.
- The Senior Management Team monitor pupil progress through regular lesson observations, pupil interviews, book and planning scrutiny. Subject Leaders also complete regular learning walks and monitoring according to their action plan/monitoring timetable.

3. Focused assessment

Secure knowledge of each pupil's current progress is a core element of teaching and learning at Usworth Colliery. Lesson planning is based on prior learning and throughout the learning process, active assessment is required to ensure that the expected rate of progress is being made.

Fundamental to our formative assessment procedures is Assessment for Learning (AfL).

A range of AfL strategies are used in the classroom:-

- Learning objectives are made explicit and shared with the pupils.
- Success criteria are agreed by the pupils and teacher.
- Self and peer assessment is used against the success criteria.
- Pupils are engaged in their learning and receive immediate feedback on their progress.
- Summative assessment opportunities are detailed in the assessment calendar. These include optional and end of KS tests. We assess core and foundation subjects. At the end of each term, assessments are completed using key skills.

- Regular continuous assessment is central to teaching and learning practice, including EYFS Development Matters. Staff use Assertive Mentoring as part of their practice in Writing and Maths.

4. Intervention

It is expected that the great majority of pupils at Usworth Colliery will make at least the expected rate of progress through first quality, class based teaching. However, for some pupils this approach may not be sufficient and these pupils, at various stages, may benefit from additional small group or 1:1 intervention programmes to enable them to make the progress required to achieve their full potential. We deploy teaching assistants and other adult helpers as effectively as possible to aid this intervention.

Central to the effective planning of an intervention programme is the knowledge the teacher has of a particular pupil or groups of pupils. When considering pupils for interventions, a wide range of assessment evidence is drawn upon to support judgements made about pupil progress. We often create our own intervention programmes to meet the needs of our children. Phase leaders and the Inclusion Manager monitor the quality of intervention in their phase and share this with the Senior Leadership Team.

5. Pupil Grouping

All classes are mixed ability. In order to meet the learning objectives and learning needs and provide appropriate challenge and support for all pupils, teachers use a range of grouping options across the year group and within their classes.

- ability groups across the year (Numeracy and literacy sets from Year 1 – Year 6 & phonics for EYFS and KS1)
- skills based grouping
- paired work (response partners) to facilitate discussion
- individual work
- pupil choice
- whole class groups

6. The Learning Environment

Our classrooms are attractive learning environments. Displays are changed regularly, to ensure that the classroom reflects the learning challenges studied by the children. We ensure that all children have the opportunity to display their best work at some time during the year. Highly visual and interactive displays, for example, 'learning walls', are used to engage pupils and encourage self-help strategies.

All classrooms are extremely well resourced (each room containing an interactive whiteboard, classroom computer with internet access, etc) facilitating a wide range of different teaching and learning activities.

We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by the children.

Creative use of internal space has provided areas for small group intervention work or 1:1 tuition and increasingly, external spaces are being used to provide the 'outdoor classroom'.

In Early Years Foundation Stage, we provide an 'enabling environment', both indoors and outdoors. The learning environment is designed to encourage EYFS children to move freely between areas, both inside and outside.

7. Curriculum Organisation

We use the National Curriculum, EYFS and the Primary Framework to guide our teaching. These set out the aims and objectives and detail what is to be taught in each year group. Subjects were grouped together and objectives shared. Across school we operate a cross-curricular approach to learning. We follow long term curriculum plan but these are adapted to meet the needs of the cohort. Our medium and short term lesson plans contain detailed information about the teaching activities and tasks to be set, the resources needed, and the type of assessment to be used. We evaluate lessons and so that we can modify and improve our teaching in the future.

Our Curriculum

The whole curriculum stems from the desire from QCA to enliven the curriculum -

'To develop a modern, world-class curriculum that will inspire and challenge all learners and prepare them for the future.'

It recognises that we need to make greater consideration to lifelong learning, as well as a clear structure of progression and continuity. It is intended to personalise the learning going on in the classroom.

The main aims are:

1. To maximise the children's achievements and create independent, lifelong learners.
2. To explicit development of learning skills and strategies across the curriculum.
3. To transfer their learning to different contexts.

4. To create a flexible approach that responds quickly to children's learning and development.

We are aiming towards a new Curriculum for September 2014 (in conjunction with the new National Curriculum). This new curriculum will be based around a learning challenge in the form of a question. There is an overarching question, which lasts for a longer period of time (usually a half-term). Then each week there are separate questions, which build up to answer the overarching question. Planning is based around these questions (ensuring appropriate coverage of all areas of learning or NC subject). The teacher and children work together to create the learning challenges. Some homework is based upon these learning challenges. Visits and visitors are imperative to answering our weekly learning challenges. Learning challenges are shared with parents and they are asked to contribute when and where they can (either through homework, visiting school to share information or sending in resources). Reflection is key to working in this way. Not only is there daily/weekly reflection times on the question, the last week of the learning challenge is given over to review and presentation. In this week, all key facts can be drawn together, extra research completed where there is little evidence to answer the question or new questions, which have arisen, can be answered. Throughout the academic year 2013/2014, we will be planning and trialling some of the strategies in this curriculum.

Through personalising the curriculum, we aim to find appropriate challenges for pupils and address their particular needs so that they may all have an equal opportunity to succeed.

We aim to cater for the needs and interests of a full range of learners including (*see Inclusion policy*):

- the gifted and talented
- learners with learning difficulties and disabilities
- learners with English as an additional language
- girls and boys
- looked after children
- learners with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties

When planning work for children with special educational needs we give due regard to information and targets contained in the children's Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

In summary, we plan learning with vulnerable pupils at the forefront and we scaffold the learning for every child at whatever level they are working at.

8. The Extended Curriculum

Helping pupils to discover and/or develop new interests is essential to personalised learning at Usworth Colliery. During the school year a range of activities are organised to enhance the curriculum:-

- Residential visits
- Extensive clubs, covering the arts and sports, as well as academic.
- Visits
- Visitors

This approach extends beyond school hours.

We ensure that all tasks and activities that the children do are safe. When we plan to take children out of school, we first inform parents and obtain their permission. In so doing, we follow the LEA guidance on Off-Site visits and volunteers.

9. Supporting children's wider needs

Schools that are able to identify barriers to learning beyond the classroom and address them are in a strong position to provide personalised learning for individual pupils. At Usworth Colliery, we aim to establish good relationships with all our families and to provide a climate open to dialogue. Within school, we can offer advice and support through our school-based services, for example:

- LA behaviour support team
- School nurse
- Educational Psychologists
- Speech and language therapy

Where additional support from other agencies is required, a 'Team around the child' (TAC) approach may be needed. This may include developing a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) to identify barriers to learning and as a result, TAC meetings, involving a range of multi-agency professionals (including Education Psychologist, CAHMS, etc) are set up by a Lead Professional.

THE ROLES WITHIN THE WHOLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

The role of governors

Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school policies on teaching and learning. In particular they:

- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by helping to allocate resources effectively
- ensure that the school buildings and premises promote successful teaching and learning
- ensure that high quality staff are appointed
- monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment through link visits to the school and in consultation with subject/phase leaders
- ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching and learning
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the school self-review processes. These include reports from subject leaders and the termly headteacher's report to governors as well as a review of the in-service training sessions attended by our staff.

The role of the school

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn.

We inform parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- holding meetings to explain our school strategies for teaching the National Curriculum;
- sending home a weekly school newsletter, as well as a fortnightly newsletter for Foundation Stage only.
- sending information to parents at the start of each term in which we outline the curriculum that the children will be studying during that term at school;
- sending reports to parents twice a year in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can improve further;
- explaining to parents how they can support their children with homework. We suggest, for example, regular shared reading with very young children, and support for older children with their projects and/or investigative work
- holding three parents' evenings a year, which provide an opportunity to discuss progress children are making.

The role of Parents

We believe that parents, as their child's primary educator, have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. Parents have a responsibility 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;
- ensure that their child is supported with homework activities which consolidate learning
- inform us of their child's interests and capabilities
- 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;
- promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general;
- fulfil the requirements set out in the home/school agreement.

The role of the child

We believe that the child has a responsibility to:

- participate as fully as possible in the learning opportunities and help other children to do the same
- work hard and try his/her best
- behave appropriately in school according to the school's behaviour code
- be polite and helpful to other pupils and adults in school
- come to school regularly and be on time
- talk at home about what he/she has learnt at school
- take good care of the school environment
- do the homework regularly and bring it back to school
- wear the correct school uniform
- tell the teacher or an adult at home if he/she finds the work difficult

MONITOR AND REVIEW

All our teachers reflect on their strengths/areas for development and their professional development needs are planned for accordingly. We provide internal and external guidance to support our teachers in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding so that they can continually improve their practice.

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.

Signed.....
Head Teacher

Signed:
Chair of Governors

Date.....

Date: