

MERE SCHOOL

Teaching Policy

This policy is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for teaching at Mere School. It lays the foundations for the whole curriculum, both formal and informal and forms the context in which all other policy statements should be read.

We are committed to helping children develop within an enjoyable, exciting, creative and caring environment.

Our belief is in the positive approach where we build on success, treating each child as an individual and starting with what they already can do. We aim to provide a teaching environment in which children are able to achieve their full potential in all aspects of their development - intellectual, social, physical, cultural, spiritual and moral.

Aims

Our aims for learning are that all children will:

- achieve their potential in terms of academic achievement, moral values and spiritual awareness,
- be tolerant and understanding with respect for the rights, views and property of others,
- develop a responsible and independent attitude towards work and towards their roles in society.

Mission Statement

“Working together to do our best”.

This statement will be in evidence around the school. Teachers will aim to develop strong and respectful relationships with children and their parents.

Through our teaching we need to aim to raise the standard of attainment and rate of progress for our pupils.

Subject knowledge

We need both an understanding and a secure knowledge of the subjects we are teaching. The use of subject content should be linked to a scheme of work which is based on National Curriculum programmes of study. Specialised vocabulary is an important feature.

Planning

This needs to show clear learning objectives which are made obvious to the children and any TA’s or helpers.

Short term, weekly planning will be taken from medium and long term planning where National Curriculum and R.E. Agreed Syllabus requirements are met.

Agreed school formats show precise intentions/objectives and a match of activities to groups of children, outcomes, assessment of these where appropriate and building onto prior attainments. They

will show as well, broad coverage of the National Curriculum and integration of several subjects, where possible.

Expectations

Work should be both challenging and interesting. Teacher's questioning is crucial. It should first seek to establish what the children know and what they can do. Secondly it should encourage different types of thinking whether focussed, critical or reflective at different times. Children need to think about their own next steps for improvement. They need to know that best efforts and pride in work are always required. Teachers need to aim high in setting challenges and then within that challenge differentiate downwards, so that each task is linked to it at an appropriate level. Activities may need to consolidate learning but should then move on quickly. The children's independence should be developed where possible. They need to extend their learning, make choices (as in DT), to organise themselves and their resources effectively and show initiative, for instance in using reference materials to do their own research.

At the same time we need to make sure that the children are interested in what they are doing. They should want to learn more and develop their own interests through their own questioning and be aware of their own progress. Children should aim to complete their work. Teachers should show good interaction with groups and individuals in order to achieve this. During lessons, teachers should work directly, teaching groups as well as individuals.

Teachers should expect high standards of behaviour which are consistent across the school. This behaviour should reflect good manners, respect for others and other qualities included in our Positive Behaviour Policy. Teachers should work at eliminating disruption to lessons and interruption to group teaching. Good listening is a key requirement.

We need to use praise and encouragement that is specific and genuine when clearly earned. We should be aiming for a level of confidence in each child which comes from success, good humour and trust in the child's abilities.

Pace/time

We need to motivate children and provide planned stimulating material but cover content in spite of children occasionally being disinterested. To establish prior knowledge quickly is helpful. Directed questions at different levels can draw children out. Rephrasing, using alternative 'easier' vocabulary should be tried; so should open ended questions. Brief 'think' times should occasionally be included. Pupils should be engaged by making the material seem special. This might be achieved by changing the tone of voice.

Teachers should plan approximate timings for parts of their lessons. Clear deadlines need to be set. Equipment should be ready or easily accessible. The lesson/activity should have a clear beginning and end. Teachers should be able quickly to gain attention when it is needed. Pupils should work without hindering each other and stay on task. They should be able to clear up efficiently. New sessions should start on time.

Purposeful Teaching/Methods

Teachers should be clear about what they are aiming at. They need to explain objectives to pupils so that they are clear about the learning intention, what it is building on and what comes next. Both teachers and pupils should be focused on raising levels of attainment. A variety of methods can be employed:

- exposition - clear instruction, demonstration and explanation.
- questioning - closed, open, challenging, encouraging.
- modelling - teacher shows/child follows, eg handwriting.
- discussion (whole class, groups or pairs).
- structured practical activities - linked to a learning intention.
- investigations and problem solving (to promote independence; consolidate and extend new learning).
- recapitulation/plenary (to evaluate and check on grasp of learning objectives).
- homework. A useful support to the teaching/learning process. Maintaining PACT is of prime importance. Other timetabled tasks should be set consistently and independence encouraged.

Assessment

Teachers should regularly check work to see whether objectives have been met.

Pupils need regular and specific feedback so that they know what to do next to improve learning. This includes comments in 'formative' marking, to take the child on a step as well as positive comments. A systematic sample of this in depth marking should give the pupil a clear indication while helping to assess levels along with the teacher's use of questions.

Teacher's planning will need to be flexible so that 'assessed outcomes' can be used to reform plans and learning in line with response.

Pupil targets should be within their grasp and they should be encouraged to set their own.

Organisation/Management/Resources

Pupils need to know where to find the equipment they need and manage it without constant teacher intervention.

The classroom should be an attractive, ordered environment where children want to come and learn.

Resources should be clearly labelled, in good condition and treated with care.

Children's work should be displayed so as to re-inforce their self esteem and place value on it.

Groups and tables should be arranged to suit the work being done. Space should be created where necessary.

Teachers should teach rather than merely manage. Children's confident use of well ordered uncluttered resources will help this.

Pupils should be encouraged to develop independent work habits and a reflective attitude. There need normally be no raised voices.

Autumn term 2007

Review: Autumn term 2010

MERE FIRST SCHOOL

Mission Statement

We want to be a school where the children have the confidence to work to the best of their abilities where they are proud of their successes, able to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and are keen to achieve the highest standards.

We want this school to be a place where they are pleased to be and where each child's needs are considered and met.

We want to create a safe, caring and stimulating environment where these intentions are always possible and in which we are a growing part of the local community.

- This statement will be in evidence around the school. Teachers will need to develop strong and respectful relationships with children and their parents.