

The Priory Primary Academy Trust

Teaching and Learning Policy



January 2012
Reviewed annually by the governing body

Introduction

The Priory Primary Academy Trust aims to be the School of choice in North Hampshire. We provide children with high quality learning experiences which lead to a consistently high level of pupil achievement. This policy sets out how time is managed, the organization of the classrooms and what the School does to create an effective learning environment.

Planning the curriculum

Each subject coordinator draws up a long term plan to show which curriculum elements should be covered by each year group. These plans also demonstrate cross-curricular links, as appropriate.

Class teachers, in collaboration with subject leaders, create medium term plans which show what will be taught, when and how.

From these medium term plans, teachers create their short term planning showing how they will deliver the curriculum on a daily basis. These plans are differentiated to encompass the individual learning needs within the class.

Short term plans consider how other adults in the room are to be utilized. The Academy is proud of the level of classroom assistant help offered to teachers and it recognises that the assistants bring a particularly valuable set of skills to the classroom. Classroom assistants provide assistance in a variety of ways including working with groups or individuals and they are involved in the planning and assessing of pupil progress.

During each academic year, special weeks or days will be planned to promote some aspect of the curriculum and to provide enrichment opportunities. During these times, planning may be different!

In addition, the curriculum is enhanced by a programme of educational visits, visitors to the classroom, drama productions, workshops etc. The cost of these is kindly met by the Parents' Association.

The quality of the teaching

In order for high quality teaching to occur, teachers should:

- have high expectations of behaviour and attainment
- inspire, motivate and challenge
- demonstrate good subject knowledge and understanding in the way and present their lessons in a lively manner
- use a variety of teaching methods; which will excite and engage the children
- use resources including additional; adults, creatively and appropriately
- be clear in their use of specific instructions and explanations
- praise pupils for effort, achievement and good behaviour and act promptly to ensure that any inappropriate behaviour ceases
- set homework effectively to reinforce and extend what is learned in the Academy
- assess pupils to measure how well they have achieved and to inform future planning.

The quality of the learning

Pupils at the Academy will acquire new knowledge and skills, develop ideas and increase their understanding. Pupils should:

- demonstrate their ability to apply intellectual, physical or creative effort to their work
- work at a good pace and produce and be productive
- show an interest in their work and be able to sustain concentration and think and learn for themselves
- understand what they are doing, be aware of how well they have done and know how they can improve.

During lessons, teachers aim to involve all pupils. They constantly check for understanding by listening to pupils and by questioning them. At the end of the lesson, the expectation is that the learning objective set out at the beginning will have been met.

Structure of lessons

The Academy considers that lessons should be fun, memorable and challenging. The structure of lessons will vary depending on what is being taught but as a general rule, the following principles of good practice apply:

- lessons will start promptly and will be well planned with appropriate use of resources
- the learning objective should be made explicit at the beginning of the lesson. Junior children are encouraged to write this in their books
- clear links will be established with previous learning or teaching
- the teacher will use questions to motivate, stimulate, assess and keep pupils on task
- lessons should have good pace and structure;
- lessons will have a plenary which will reinforce the learning objective.

The classroom environment

Children learn best when they are happy, interested and motivated. At the Academy, we know through our questionnaires and informal discussions that children enjoy coming to school.

We are very proud that the standard of the facilities offered by the School is excellent. Classrooms have high ceilings with acoustic panels to ensure that appropriate purposeful noise levels are maintained. All the classrooms have a light and airy feel and each benefit from a beautiful outlook. There is a happy atmosphere both in the classrooms and around school, generally. The classrooms are clean, tidy and well organized and children are aware of where equipment is and are able to access it.

Children respect one another, the adults in school and the environment. At the Academy, we aim to speak and act as others would wish to be spoken and done to.

Displays around the Academy reflect all aspects of the curriculum. They celebrate children's achievement and demonstrate that a high standard of learning takes place in all year groups.

Assessment

Assessment of pupils is on-going during lessons, and teachers will constantly assess pupils by means of observing pupils; listening to pupils as they take part in discussion; questioning; setting tasks; testing. The Academy has an assessment policy and further details can be found there.

Assessment improves learning and raises achievement if it is planned and actively involves children in their own learning; is used to inform future learning targets and to adjust teachers' planning and teaching; celebrates achievement and provides effective feedback to children through marking.

Teachers will record lesson and pupil evaluation on short term plans.

Assessment pieces of work are placed in each child's folder as they move through the Academy, and results from teacher assessment, SATs, optional SATs and NFER tests are used by the senior management team to produce tracking sheets which also provide targets for every child in Literacy and Numeracy for the end of the year.

Presentation of work

The Priory Primary Academy expects children to be proud of their work and they are encouraged to form good habits from their very earliest days in school. We expect that work presented in books is legible and neat and of sufficient quantity. Teachers make clear their expectations of standards of presentation at the outset of each lesson.

Timetabling

The allocation of time to each subject is based on the guidelines produced by QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) in 'Designing and Timetabling the Primary Curriculum'. However, the timetable is designed to give a broad and balanced curriculum over the course of the School year, and cannot be judged on any specific week.

Monitoring and evaluation

Subject leaders are responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of their subject. This involves various activities such as discussions with teachers or pupils, shared teaching, monitoring books and/or planning, and informal observations. They also check that long and medium term plans are providing the coherence, progression, continuity and depth necessary.

More formal observations of teaching are carried out by the Head Teacher and the Deputy Head. Additionally, teaching and learning reviews with the Academy's improvement partner are occasionally carried out, with appropriate feedback given to staff.

The Governing Body have agreed the Pay Policy and the Performance Management Policy. Annual reviews for teachers take place when targets will be reviewed and new ones set. Three targets (one based on pupil performance, one on a common school issue and one for individual professional development) are set each year for all teachers out of their NQT year.

Parents' evenings are held twice a year, and annual reports are written each summer to inform parents of their child's progress. The School has an open door policy, encouraging parents to call in for informal discussions at any convenient time.

Monitoring

This policy is monitored by the Governors and reviewed annually.