



Primary Policy for Learning and Teaching

RSA Academies' mission is to provide an inspirational and creative education for all pupils which relates their learning to the wider world, provides experiences which broaden horizons, and enables pupils and young people to develop the skills needed for success and personal fulfilment.

RSA primary policy for learning and teaching consists of everything that promotes learners' intellectual, personal, social, creative and physical development.

Everything we teach is tailored to meet the needs of each individual, developing interests and aptitudes and to widen their learning and enrich their lives.

This policy is a statement of aims and principles relating to our intentions to develop pupils as learners, recognising a set of common values and purposes that demonstrate high expectations of progress and attainment which increase the possibilities for the pupils in our care.

We know that learning takes place best and most effectively in a positive, enthusiastic, stimulating environment in which the learners feel safe and valued. We recognise also that pupils need to take ownership of their learning and with our support, drive their own success.

In association with our school's aims:

We Are a Learning Community:

- Valuing mutual respect, building upon strengths and overcoming difficulties;
- Aiming to provide the best quality learning experience and environment for every child and adult in our care;
- Promoting the learning of qualities of mind, body, spirit, imagination and artistic appreciation;
- Actively encouraging learners to take ownership of their own learning by questioning, working together, developing reasoning and dialogue to support thinking logically and laterally;
- Developing enthusiasm for learning, creativity and challenge.

Aims of our Learning and Teaching Policy:

- To enhance pupils progress, attainment and development, through an understanding of learning how to learn;
- To improve the capacity of pupils to learn for enjoyment, develop their potential and meet the complex demands of the 21st century;
- To regard everyone as powerful partners in school improvement - whole staff improvement in the understanding of learning and their role in its promotion;
- To improve the school's capacity to focus on learning and on change strategies that support the learning of the whole school community, recognising that individuals learn in a variety of different ways.

We are committed to providing:

- Stimulating and enthusiastic teaching which interest, excites and motivates pupils and accelerates their learning;
- A culture of high aspirations through high expectations of what pupils can do and achieve;
- Consistency in the quality of teaching across the school;
- Development of good learning habits, with many opportunities for pupils to find things out for themselves;
- Structured approaches to reading, writing and maths within the whole curriculum;
- Well-planned lessons which provide for the differing needs of pupils;
- Stimulating classroom environments;
- Frequent praise and a valued reward system;
- Well-trained and deployed teaching assistants;
- A close check on learning during lessons, with effective marking and assessment.

What do these commitments look like in our school?

Effective Lessons

Pupils are engaged in their learning, are having fun, developing new skills and making progress throughout. All are engaged in high quality dialogue and reasoning. Planning tailored activities to individual pupils needs based on sound assessment for learning strategies, including the most capable.

Good Teaching and Good Learning

Pupils can recognise what personal learning and thinking skills they are using and that they need to develop in order to become more effective learners. English, mathematics and

Science are taught and strengthened through real applications across a range of subjects. Pupils are developing their language skills by being encouraged to communicate their understanding and evaluate their learning. Pupils know what they are learning and the purpose for that learning. Pupils and all adults know where they have reached on their learning journey and what they need to consider next in order to improve. Pupils and adults are clear about the targets they need to reach by the end of the lesson, the end of the section of learning and by the end of the year.

An Effective Learning Environment

A place where pupils feel safe and valued and self esteem is high. It is a place of mutual respect and pupils have a voice. It can be inside or outside but it is stimulating and challenging with a sense of excitement. Classrooms are vibrant with celebrations of pupils' work and alongside, supporting prompts that pupils and adults can access. There are model examples of what targets should look like when they have been achieved and in addition, there are examples of vocabulary. Resources (including technology) are appropriate and accessible supporting pupils' independence and choice.

Attitudes to Learning

Using the 'growth mind-set' approach, there is a 'can do' ethos in our schools. We place a great emphasis on basic skills development. Pupils ask questions of each other and of the world. Pupils are involved at the outset in planning their curriculum so they have ownership and therefore want to know more. Pupils talk eagerly about their school, their learning and engage with each other and adults.

We understand that through life, it is important to develop four fundamental types of learning. We agree that sequentially they are:

- Learning to be - developing autonomy, judgement and personal responsibility. Learning how to think, to understand one's own creative talents and how to use them, to enjoy learning for its own sake;
- Learning to live together - developing an understanding of others and appreciation of interdependence, to participate and co-operate with others; understanding ethics and values, society, and cultural and community diversity; relating to people - understanding how to operate in teams, being able to communicate, managing personal, emotional relationships, stress and conflict;
- Learning to do - the competence to deal with many situations and to act creatively in one's environment; managing time, change, success and disappointment, taking initiative, and managing risk and uncertainty;
- Learning to know - acquiring a broad general knowledge, the instruments of understanding and learning to learn; managing information and learning the importance of lifelong learning and the acquisition of new knowledge and skills.

All of the following are important in our schools

Intelligences

We understand that all our learners are different and bring a variety of strengths to the group. All are equally valued and we respect the nature of intelligence in its variety of forms.

Pupils may demonstrate one or many of the following intelligences:

- Bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence;
- Linguistic intelligence;
- Interpersonal intelligence ;
- Musical intelligence;
- Logico-mathematical; □ Intra-personal intelligence; □ Spatial intelligence.

We recognise that pupils may have one or more, perhaps a combination of these intelligences. We provide situations, which give opportunities for all intelligences to be applied. Work required from the learner therefore may be in written, artistic, musical, dramatic form, or perhaps require discussion within small or large groups. To value the varied intelligence of the learner is to enhance their self-esteem and self worth.

Motivation through the Curriculum

As our curriculum is well managed, inclusive, practical and aspirational and closely relates to pupils' needs and interests, the curriculum we offer excites and motivates them. We have physical and emotional well being at the heart of what we do with an emphasis on speaking and listening. Pupils choose the context in which they want to learn in partnership with their teachers who establish the learning intentions for the pupils. This close partnership results in high self esteem and excitement for learning.

"I don't really want to go home at the end of the day, not because I don't like home, but because I want to know what's next." Nathan Year 4.

Good behaviour is the result of such enthusiasm. We achieve success in English and Mathematics, not by slavishly following literacy and numeracy schemes, although high quality teaching and the adoption of best practice in these subjects is very important, but rather the focus is on the whole curriculum and the whole child is what brings us success and motivation in the basic skills.

Positive approaches to assessment for learning (see Assessment and Marking Policies)

To enhance learning, we use day to day assessment strategies of questioning, observing, discussing, checking on pupils' understanding and analysing responses. This will provide

information about where pupils are in their understanding, so that teachers can plan the next stages for learning. We do this through:

- Asking questions prior to a unit of work to establish the starting points of the pupils;
- Providing opportunities for self and peer assessment;
- Ensuring all pupils are involved through collaborative talk, constructive feedback both verbal and written through response marking (see marking policy);
- Providing and regularly discussing targets with pupils;
- Using formative assessment to identify specifically areas of learning that need to be addressed.

Positive Structure to Lessons

Lessons are planned and delivered to promote the raising of standards by following our agreed guidelines.

Learning Objectives

Teachers will provide the learners with tight, focussed Learning Objectives associated with the 'bigger picture' for each teaching session. Learning objectives are supported by success criteria which are generated with the pupils to promote their ownership and independence.

Mini plenaries are used throughout lessons to support assessment and tackle any misconceptions.

Whole School Learning

Everything in the school will be based explicitly on learning. As adults cooperatively planning for the learners in our school, all of us are bound by the question 'What difference will we as adults make to learning?' All adults in the school share the notion that we too are learners and are reflective practitioners in order to constantly improve our practice. Adults are encouraged to further their learning, respect and trust through:

- Talking about learning and teaching;
- CPD, on courses and through expertise within school and peer coaching;
- Educational research;
- Teacher/TA visits to leading teachers and the observation of practice within the school;
- Collaborative planning, monitoring and evaluation; □ Shared planning and involvement of support staff.

Involvement of the wider Community

We strive to involve the community as much as possible in our learning. We welcome and respect visitors, accepting and building upon the knowledge and experience community

members can offer. We endeavour to build the principles of 'lifelong learning' into the school ethos and extend our learning beyond the classroom. We build relationships with parents and work with them to enhance the learning of all the school community, providing them with information and welcoming their contributions. We value cooperation and partnership with other schools and organisations, and the opportunity to share in examples of 'good practice'.

Helpful References:

- Guy Claxton 'Building Learning Power'. www.guyclaxton.com/blb.htm;
- Shirley Clarke Assessment for Learning Series;
- Carol Dweck 'Growth Mindset'; https://www.ted.com/talks/carol_dweck_the_power_of_believing_that_you_can_improve?language=en;
- 'The Extra Mile (Primary) Achieving success with pupils from deprived communities' and 'Strengthening transfers and transitions (Partnerships for progress and Sustaining improvement, building capacity).

12.4.16

Review Spring 2018