



AKELEY WOOD  
SCHOOL

## **AKELEY WOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL: TEACHING AND LEARNING**

Akeley Wood Junior School is committed to the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum, informed by the national plan, but reflecting, at the same time, the particular abilities, aptitudes and aspirations of our own pupils. This policy aims to ensure that all pupils have an equal access to that curriculum, and that the quality of their learning experience leads to a consistently high level of involvement and achievement. Planning and implementation of lessons with particular reference to differentiation in the classroom is vital to meet this target.

We place considerable emphasis upon the development of basic skills in language, literacy and numeracy, skills fundamental to each child's ability to benefit from a wider curriculum. That wider curriculum is so designed as to not only to support the development of each child's academic abilities but also their creative, aesthetic, physical, moral and social growth. ICT provides each child with additional tools with which to unravel, and thence connect, the varied strands of the curriculum.

### **A. LEARNING AND THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

We believe that children are likely to learn best when they:

- Are happy, secure and confident
- Are interested and motivated
- Achieve success and gain approval
- Are given differentiated tasks that match their ability
- Clearly understand what is required of them
- Are aware of the boundaries that are set for their safety and well-being
- Are challenged and stimulated

The learning environment should be organised to ensure that children have the opportunity to:

- Work individually, in groups and as a class
- Make decisions
- Work co-operatively and develop social skills
- Solve problems
- Be creative

- Express their own ideas with confidence; listen carefully and courteously to the ideas of others
- Develop independence and use initiative
- Receive support when it is required
- Achieve academically

Effective learning is likely to take place in an environment that:

- Is stimulating and offers realistic challenges
- Is calm and orderly
- Is happy and supportive
- Is well organised
- Is well resourced
- Is welcoming and values each child for what they are
- Provides equal opportunities
- Makes clear the school's commitment to high expectations of pupils' behaviour and effort

In that environment, and from as early a juncture as possible, children should be encouraged to develop their organisational skills and independence through:

- The setting of appropriate differentiated tasks that enable them to progress without constant reference to the teacher
- The building of their confidence and self-esteem through praise, reward and the occasional use of appropriate sanctions
- The example set by teaching and non-teaching staff
- Co-operation
- The exercise of responsibility and self-reliance

### **Routines and Rules**

Routines and rules in the classroom contribute to a healthy learning environment. Children are at their best when they know where they stand. To be effective, therefore, routines and rules should be:

- Agreed by the children and clearly understood
- Fair and consistent
- Simple, realistic and positive
- Kept to a minimum in number but enforced
- Based around daily activities with which the children are familiar and comfortable

All rules should contribute to the child's understanding of the boundaries of behaviour, and should be consistent with the school's behaviour policy.

### **Achievement**

Children will achieve in a variety of situations and activities and at often wildly differing levels. Social, physical, creative and academic achievement can be celebrated in many ways. Children are often very realistic about their abilities and about status within their peer group. They like to earn recognition and are often acutely aware of when our praise is unmerited. The achievements of all children should be recognised and rewarded by:

- Verbal or written praise by peers, teachers, Head-teacher or parents
- Displays of their work
- Opportunities to perform or to share their successes e.g. in an assembly
- The awarding of star, stickers, house points, certificates and trophies.

Where possible, children should be encouraged, at an appropriate level, to appraise their own achievements.

## **B. CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT**

Teachers will all bring their individuality to their classrooms. They will develop their own classroom management and teaching styles and this is to be encouraged. It is important, nonetheless, to ensure that individuality is tempered by the need to provide a secure and consistent environment for the children, and to that end, we share the common, and agreed, principles that are set out below.

Teachers teach, and children learn, through a variety of sensory paths – visual, oral, tactile. The best teaching probably draws upon elements of each, acknowledging the different ways in which children learn. Good teaching will also balance whole class, group and individual activities. With younger pupils in particular, there will often be several different activities in progress at the same time. The teacher should always be aware of the differing abilities of each child and set appropriate differentiated work. The teacher may be more heavily involved with one group than with others, and children should become familiar with the demands of planned activities that require them to work without immediate teacher input. From the outset, this can be helped by:

- Having well organised and clearly labelled resources
- Taking time to train children in routines and procedures that lead to their confident and independent use of learning resources
- Making clear to the children what they should do when they have completed an activity
- Making children aware that the teacher does not always have to be their first line of contact. Other pupils with whom they are working or support assistants can also often help

### **School Policies**

All curriculum and procedural documents are reviewed and updated as part of a regular cycle. The school's expectations of staff, and a detailed description of their responsibilities and obligations, are set out in the Teachers' Guide. It is the duty of all staff to be familiar with school policy and to apply it consistently.

### **Planning and Record Keeping**

All staff are required to plan lessons within the agreed framework of the school. Planning should take account of key learning objectives, of the activities to be undertaken and the resources required to support those activities, the means by which children's progress will be assessed, show links to Assertive Mentoring targets where applicable, reasonable adjustments for pupils with special educational needs and of brief evaluations that will guide future planning. Clear records of pupil progress should be maintained by all staff,

including any standardised test information alongside teachers' own observations and 'on going' commentary.

### **Assertive Mentoring**

All children (Year 1-6) will undertake Assertive Mentoring testing termly, sometimes more, in Writing and Maths.

The data from these assessments will then be inputted on to the Assertive Mentoring tracker by the teacher.

This tracking then informs planning, interventions and groupings.

Children are given targets relating to the data and work towards them throughout the term. These are also shared with parents in termly reports/parents' evenings. Those children who are identified as not making sufficient progress are placed either under surveillance or into a Pupil Progress Group.

All sub stages are recorded on Pupil Asset where progress and attainment can be monitored further.

Each English and Maths teacher will have a copy of their Assertive Mentoring sheets and will update and annotate regularly. Heads of Year will keep a termly overview of these.

Reading Comprehension and age is tracked by the NGRT digital testing and results again inform planning and interventions.

Science is currently assessed at the beginning and end of each topic by Rising Stars. This will be tracked by Assertive Mentoring from September 2016.

### **Time Management**

It is important that all activities are carefully planned to ensure that each child is working at a level compatible with their ability. Children should understand exactly what is required of them when they enter the classroom and when they have completed an activity; a reminder list of tasks for individuals who have completed their main work is often helpful. Lessons should be started promptly and the initial pace maintained. Careful planning and efficient classroom organisation will significantly reduce the potential for time to be wasted.

### **Equal Opportunities**

Children have a right to equal opportunity. Teachers expectations of behaviour and effort should be the same for all children. Groups and activities should be mixed where possible, and particular care should be taken in science, mathematics, technology and physical education to ensure that the interests and aptitudes of girls and boys are equally represented. The same children should not be allowed to dominate class or group based activities. Our programme of out of school activities is open to all children, numbers and safety considerations permitting.

## **The Physical Organisation of Classrooms**

Ideally, classrooms should be organised to allow:

- Ease of movement for pupils and teacher. The teacher should be able to reach every child's desk/table without impediment
- Flexibility – to allow a range of different activities
- Sufficient working surfaces for pupils to spread out all the materials that they need to use
- A quiet corner

Furniture should be of a size compatible with the age of the pupils who will use the room, and should allow them to sit and to work comfortably and to have easy access to stored resources.

Storage should be arranged to enable:

- The tidy stowing of pupils' personal possessions – coats/PE kit/ cases etc (pegs or storage lockers clearly labelled/numbered)
- Easy access to the resources that support a particular subject or a particular project – classes should be taken through the storage system for particular rooms, and should be required to play an active role in distributing, and returning to their proper place, the resources that they require. This will be made more possible if resources are clearly and neatly labelled. Where storage tray units are in use, individual trays should be labelled and their contents periodically checked

## **Resources**

We hope to provide a range of resources to support teaching and learning across age ranges and the curriculum spectrum. Resources are the subject of regular audit, and the annual budget process requires a careful assessment of priorities for the replacement of 'consumables' or out-moded resources and for the addition of new materials and equipment.

**Children should be taught, and shown by example, that resources are finite and should not be used in a profligate manner.**

All staff should monitor the resources to which they have access, making clear to the Head when additions/replacements are required and ensuring at all times that materials and equipment are safely and carefully used.

**This has particular relevance in subjects such as art, design and technology, ICT, science and physical education where sometimes expensive, sometimes potentially dangerous, materials are in regular use. Staff and pupils have a duty to be aware of potential dangers, and staff should lay down clear and unambiguous routines for the use of such equipment.**

## **Displays**


High quality display sets the tone of any classroom, of any school. It helps to create a stimulating and attractive environment, and can contribute significantly to the sense of pride that children have in their school. A number of pointers to good display work are suggested below:

- Encourage variety – displays in 2D, 3D and differing media
- Ensure that displays are changed regularly
- Ensure that all areas of the curriculum are covered from time to time
- Try to make some displays **interactive** i.e. stimulating the children’s questions, eliciting their responses
- Give all children the opportunity to see their work on display
- Make clear and colourful labels and ‘headlines’ for displays – these can have an eye-catching effect
- Encourage the children to use the potential of ICT to create work for display – graphics, ‘clip-art’, ‘power-point’, differing styles of word-processing
- Mount all work carefully – do not put up work for display with single drawing pins or single staples – to do so suggests a rushed and unprofessional job; back all display boards with colourful paper and, ideally, a border
- Keep a photographic record of past displays (very helpful at inspection time!)
- Where children’s work is used it should show marking comments where applicable

**And finally .....6 tips for classroom management**

1. Establish clear and straightforward routines for the start and end of each day, and of each lesson; train the children in those routines
2. Involve the pupils in agreeing a ‘classroom code’
3. Insist, from the earliest point, on courtesy and taking turns; have high expectations
4. Be friendly, but be firm, fair and consistent
5. Give all instructions clearly and without ambiguity; let the children know that you are in charge and allow them to understand what you require of them
6. Ensure that all pupils are given work appropriate to their ability/aptitude/individual needs and that there is stretch and challenge.

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Signed   
Mrs C G Page  
Headteacher