



 **Teaching & Learning Policy** 

‘Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day’

Reviewed By	Ryan O’Hearn	Policy Owner	October 2016
Ratified by	Matthew Fox	Governor	October 2018
NEXT REVIEW			October 2018

Creative learning is at the heart of our teaching and learning policy at Shirley Infant and Shirley Junior Schools. We believe that developing creativity in pupils leads to learners with an excitement for learning, a confident and enquiring attitude, increasing independence in learning and willingness to take risks.

Aims of the policy

For all learners to;-

- develop an excitement for learning with a high level of motivation
- engage positively and actively with high quality teaching and broad learning opportunities which are relevant to children’s own lives
- achieve the highest standards, making demonstrable progress which is monitored and celebrated
- have access to an inclusive, creative curriculum that is relevant and challenging, and which builds on a sound knowledge of basic skills
- experience a safe and stimulating learning environment

Teaching and learning strategies

Teaching strategies are varied and involve different teaching styles. For example, pupils may be taught in large or small groups, as individuals or whole class. Sometimes a whole class input to a lesson may be appropriate and at other times children will be taught as smaller groups, depending on their needs. Lessons involve pupils as actively as possible to maximise engagement with learning. Pupils are given opportunities to work individually, in pairs or in groups, sometimes this will involve adult support and at other times children will work independently.

We identify these strategies that are key to promoting creative learning at Shirley Infant School;-

- Effective questioning of pupils that encourages independent thinking and a spirit of enquiry
- Focussing on problem solving and communication
- Promoting the development of speaking and listening to explore ideas, to encourage empathy, make decisions and build confidence
- Addressing and celebrating diversity
- Differentiating for individuals and groups to ensure appropriate level of challenge
- Adapting different styles of delivery to meet needs of individuals and groups

- Meeting the needs of pupils with SEN
- Involving learners in assessment, review and evaluation
- Recognising and recording progress and achievement
- Celebrating success
- Providing effective feedback that moves pupils' learning forward
- Enabling pupils to take increasing responsibility for their own learning
- Ensuring progression and attainment of all pupils
- Sharing learning with parents and carers

Creative learning

Creative learners engage enthusiastically with their learning and develop these characteristics:-

- Questioning of each other to develop thinking skills
- Responding positively to challenges and persevering
- Making connections and seeing relationships
- Understanding their next steps in learning
- Exploring ideas and options
- Reflecting critically
- Working collaboratively
- Explaining, discussing and debating, opportunities for speaking and listening
- Increased independence

Teachers and teaching assistants engaged in effective teaching display these characteristics:-

- High expectations for all pupils
- Effective questioning of pupils to develop their learning
- Long term commitment, readiness to adapt and to take risks
- Working collaboratively with shared goals and aspirations for pupils
- Willingness to share good practice and continuing engagement with professional learning
- Good subject knowledge to support pupils' enquiry, independent thinking and debate
- Effective engagement with the wider community
- Continual review, reflection and development of new approaches to teaching and learning to maintain effectiveness of creative learning

Creative curriculum

Curriculum provision is central to the development of creative learners. The curriculum is regularly reviewed and adapted to ensure that it engages and motivates pupils and provides continuous opportunities for pupil development. The curriculum is delivered mostly through a 'topic' approach with cross curricular themes which motivate pupils. Each topic begins with a 'hook', an activity which engages pupil interest such as an educational visit, a play, a mystery, etc. Each topic ends with a celebratory event when parents are often invited to share in the outcomes of the pupils' work. Some subjects continue to be taught discreetly;- eg maths, PE, and RE through progressive units of work when these do not fit with appropriately with the topic.

This section on MOOT is only relevant to Shirley Infant school

Key opportunities to develop independent learning are provided through MOOT (Managing Our Own Time) sessions which focus on child- initiated tasks, which are linked to topics studies. A wide range of learning experiences are provided which are selected by pupils during these sessions. Teachers and teaching assistants work alongside pupils to extend their learning during MOOT, though questioning which promotes thinking skills and independent learning.

- Well organised cross curricular links allowing scope for independent enquiry

- Inclusiveness, ensuring accessibility and relevance for all pupils
- Equality in terms of disabilities, ethnicity, gender, religion or belief, social and economic status
- A focus on experiential learning where knowledge, understanding and skills are developed through first hand practical experiences and evaluations
- Well integrated use of technology
- Broad and accessible enrichment opportunities; well supported links with the local community and cultures to enhance pupils' learning

Planning and assessment

Sequences of lessons are planned by teachers in year group teams. This planning provides parity for pupils in the year group and ensures that all pupils have equal opportunities. Teachers are able to work collaboratively, to plan to move pupils on progressively and to moderate pupil work more effectively.

Effective planning for creative learning includes;-

- Regular review and update of schemes of work
- Session plans which incorporate outcomes from learner assessment (next steps in learning evident)
- Careful planning which indicates opportunities for enquiry, debate, speculation, experimentation, and review
- Learning opportunities which engage pupils in active learning
- High expectations with clear learning objectives which learners understand and articulate
- Involvement of other adults in the classroom effectively through purposeful planning and communication

Assessment for learning plays an important role in developing learners. Opportunities for pupils to become involved in self-assessment and peer assessment encourages them to be questioning and challenging, and to reflect on ideas and outcomes, all key aspects of creative learners.

Effective assessment for learning;-

- Recognition of pupil achievement and plans for next steps in learning
- Use of pupil observation, pupil interview and work sampling to provide evidence of achievement
- Sharing of steps in learning clearly with pupils
- Encouraging pupils to increasingly self-assess using strategies according to age or tasks – 'thumbs up', traffic lights, progressive success criteria.
- Providing feedback to pupils which is meaningful and supporting them in understanding the next phase
- Monitoring progress of individuals and groups and setting targets for future achievement
- Marking work in accordance with school guidelines
- Moderating pupil work across groups and classes

Environment

A safe and stimulating learning environment is key to supporting pupils' learning.

- Safe learning areas
- Attractive learning resources of high quality
- Well organised and resourced learning areas
- Accessible resources
- Stimulating displays which celebrate pupils' achievements
- Integrated learning technologies where appropriate

Parents

The school recognises the importance of parental support in children's learning and staff actively encourage parents to become regularly involved in their children's learning. Support for parents is provided through curriculum workshops, curriculum newsletters, communication through reading diaries and one to one parent meetings.

Governors

The governors will monitor the success and implementation of the policy, through formal channels such as the Teaching and Learning Committee and through less formal channels such as link visits and their day-to-day interactions with the school, for example this may include school visits in the case of parent governors, or subject leader interviews with regards to core and foundation subjects.

The governors will make sure they understand and agree with the focus of the curriculum for any given year and will agree with the SLT the benchmarks against which progress will be assessed and the measures and outcomes that will indicate success.

The governors will provide help, through their own contacts and professional expertise, to link the curriculum to the local community where possible.

Related policies

Behaviour

Marking guidelines

Curriculum subject policies

Equal opportunities