

LISLAGAN PRIMARY SCHOOL



LEARNING & TEACHING POLICY

Ratified 14th November 2018



LISLAGAN PRIMARY SCHOOL

LEARNING & TEACHING POLICY

The Board of Governors, principal and staff of Lislagan Primary School recognise that improving the quality of learning and teaching is fundamental to the overall progression of the children in our care. It is our responsibility to assist our children in developing an array of skills to ensure they aspire to becoming independent thinkers who are emotionally and cognitively developed, self-sufficient individuals ready to face the challenges of a global community. Our Mission Statement advocates the '***we make learning a life-long habit***' and in order to bring this goal to fruition, teachers, parents and children must work together in the triangle of learning to ensure we develop all aspects of the children's potential.

Learning and teaching is an intricate process of intertwining the promotion of learning with the emotional well-being of the participant. Therefore, it is essential that the quality of learning and teaching in Lislagan Primary School focuses on the holistic development of the child and that the teachers acknowledge that we are a school that works under the auspices of emotional intelligence. We want our children to show autonomy, resilience, perseverance and progression in their learning in order to foster '***life-long habits***'. Today's social and economic needs require models of learning that entail;

- *Mastery of basic skills;*
- *The ability to work with others;*
- *Being able to deal with constant distractions;*
- *Working at different levels across different disciplines;*
- *Using verbal skills, and;*
- *Problem-solving and decision-making.'* (The Teacher's Toolkit. Paul Ginnis 2004)

Aims

Learning and Teaching in Lislagan is designed to meet the requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum through a child-centred approach where learning is made visible and enjoyable. We believe that relationships are crucial to the success of any learning situation and recognise that we must provide an environment that supports the emotional development of all stakeholders. Through our learning and teaching programme we will strive to: -

- Ensure that Lislagan provides a happy, safe, emotionally operational environment where relationships are valued and nurtured;
- Foster high self-esteem and belief in staff and children;
- Aspire to the highest standards of learning possible and teaching appropriate to the individual needs of the children;

- Ensure that through ‘the why, how, and what of learning’ positive habits are instilled in all learners, (adults & children); (based on research of Stephen Covey);
- Promote the use of a range of different teaching approaches to cater for different learning styles and ranges of intelligence;
- Ensure that the children are given effective feedback, celebrating the success and highlighting the areas for development – both orally and written;
- Adhere to the structures detailed in the Monitoring & Evaluating Policy designed to affirm that high quality learning and teaching is taking place throughout the school;
- Enable children to understand their community and help them build a mutually beneficial affiliation with community groups;
- Support the learning and teaching in Lislagan through effective leadership and management structures.

Teacher Responsibility

In Lislagan we believe that it is how teachers think collectively about their impact and progression in learning that determines success for our children. Therefore, we will strive to ensure that the collegiate approach is promoted and that: -

- The leadership within the school will provide opportunities for meaningful collaboration to take place;
- Planning is systematic and effective showing clear learning intentions, differentiation, and purposeful evaluation of impact for learning;
- Expectations for all our children are ‘high’ and ‘reasonable’ predicated on ability and understanding of prior concepts;
- Classroom assistants and teachers get opportunities to discuss learning intentions and expectations to maximise capacity for all;
- A fusion of teaching strategies will be used to cater for the differing learning styles; visual, auditory and kinaesthetic and where possible children get experiences that develop multi-disciplined learning;
- Teaching will motivate the children’s interest and perseverance with their tasks;
- The children will be given opportunities to identify and select equipment to assist them in their learning and promote independence in the use of aids, materials and ICT;
- The children will be given the skills and opportunities to collaborate positively in a range of learning scenarios involving groups of different composition and size. Through guided and modelled interaction they will acknowledge the importance of listening to and respecting the opinions and ideas of others;
- Teachers will establish classroom routines, implement agreed class rules, work formats and behaviour patterns;
- Teachers will prepare differentiated resources, which are readily accessible when required;
- Teachers specify what learners are expected to learn and how/when learning is to be undertaken;

- Teachers are flexible in their organisation and planning to take into account the reality and challenges of the learning environment and the individual needs of the learner;
- Teachers will use questioning techniques that excite the curiosity of the learner and extend;
- Time is dedicated to plenaries in order for learning to be reflected upon and shared;
- Teachers will provide stimulating challenges that allow for both success and extension of knowledge/skills/problem-solving etc.;
- Teachers will ensure a climate of risk taking and learning from mistakes, a climate that promotes resilience and resourcefulness;
- Teachers involve the learners in the process to ensure promotion of further learning.

Learners Responsibility

Learning is a complex process and in Lislagan we believe that all learners are different and they respond to stimuli differently. We believe that engagement in the learning process is fundamental to success and it is what the learner brings to the process can further influence development. From the early days of Primary 1 to leaving the school our learners are expected to engage in the following ways: -

- Take responsibility by following the morning routines which are embedded throughout the school – organising belongings, engaging in Primary Movement and being prepared to learn;
- Identify how best they learn and be secure in the knowledge that everyone learns differently and it is acceptable to utilise a range methods and strategies to reach their goals;
- Recognise their successes and identify areas for development – not knowing is not failing, it is an opportunity for ‘not knowing yet’ but will in the future;
- Are confident about expressing their own thinking and understanding and listen to and respect others’ ideas and opinions;
- Work independently and collaboratively for success;
- Self-referenced learning to review progress and set attainable goals;
- Work with peers to review progress and have a shared understanding of how to improve;
- Use opportunities for ICT to extend their knowledge and skills;
- Attend school and engage in all aspects of the curriculum.

Assessment

In Lislagan Primary School we recognise the significance of assessment in the learning and teaching process and believe that assessment and testing is more than an end product of learning. Assessment is viewed as an integral element of the planning process, a vehicle for allowing the teachers to work with the learners to determine what is being learned, identify further steps of learning and provide both teachers and children with productive feedback to help improve both the learning and teaching. ‘AfL, A Practical Guide’ advocates that assessment as part of the teaching cycle assists both teachers and children to emphasise

progress, raise children's achievement in learning and celebrate success. In Lislagan we believe that children learn best and profit from assessment when the learning intentions are shared between teacher and child, feedback is given on successes as well as areas for improvement, opportunities are provided to read and respond to feedback and that time for reflection and evaluation is provided to consider why, how and what they learn. We believe that it is only through the process of reflecting on why, how and what we learn that a *'life-long habit'* can be embedded.

Monitoring & Evaluating

The quality of learning and teaching will be monitored and evaluated at a variety of levels by all staff and the areas to be monitored will reflect the priorities in the School Development Plan.

Teachers

In the classroom teachers will assess through: -

- observation and discussion;
- marking of work;
- planning which includes evaluation for impact on learning;
- formative assessment
- summative assessment

Co-ordinators

Co-ordinators will monitor through: -

- teachers' planning notes
- sampling children's work;
- classroom observation;
- leading subject groups;
- staff discussion.

Senior Leadership Team

The SLT will monitor through: -

- all of the above;
- review of test scores at whole school level;
- overview of children's learning at both key stages and whole school level;
- small group discussions
- attendance

Inclusivity

At Lislagan we are acutely aware that there is a diverse and wide range of learning abilities and learning readiness to be catered for within all classes within the school. We believe it is our duty of care to provide for all children, including children with learning difficulties and children who are gifted and talented. We will ensure that the identification of children's needs is continuous and that it draws on both qualitative and quantitative information.

It is our belief that there is a need to extend our range of strategies to identify all levels of ability. Children who have been identified in these areas will have individualised education plans to cater for their specific needs.

It is our belief that learning and teaching involves more than teachers and learners but requires input from the following: -

- Parents and Carers through the 'triangle of learning';
- Members of the Board of Governors;
- Other primary schools (sporting activities, joint trips and residential opportunities)
- Local post primary schools
- Local churches
- Ballymoney library
- Local Services (PSNI, Fire Service, Ambulance Service etc.);
- Links with sporting clubs (Coleraine and District Primary Schools Football Association, Joey Dunlop Centre, Paul Logan Tennis Club)

Conclusion

This policy will be reviewed on a two-year cycle and amended as appropriate to assimilate new guidance/recommendations to ensure the implementation of this policy ensures that the learning and teaching in Lislagan is effective and caters for the needs of all stakeholders.