



# Greenbank Primary School

## Teaching and Learning Policy Years 1-6

Date adopted:	Autumn 2016
Review Cycle:	3 years basis or in the light of any relevant legislative changes or updated guidance
Review Date:	Autumn 2019
Committee:	Curriculum and Policy Committee
Author:	Senior Leadership team

### Overview

At Greenbank every child has an entitlement to receive teaching of the highest quality. We believe that if we have a shared understanding of what constitutes effective teaching and learning, the greater our success will be in ensuring all pupils are provided with high quality teaching and learning experiences; subsequently leading to high levels of pupil achievement. Teachers have a professional responsibility to ensure that their teaching meets these standards. The headteacher, the leadership team and other identified staff will monitor, evaluate and review teaching and learning to ensure that this high standard is met.

### Aims

This policy sets out the fundamental elements of teaching and learning at Greenbank which are key to raising standards of achievement. In implementing this policy we aim to provide consistency of teaching and learning across the school to:

- enable children to learn efficiently so they are able to make good progress;
- give children the skills they need to become lifelong learners;
- equip children with the knowledge and skills they will need in the next stage of their education/life;
- provide an inclusive education, meeting the needs of all children;
- enable children to become independent learners;
- challenge all pupils to achieve their full potential.

### The Curriculum

At Greenbank teachers of Years 1-6 will use the new National Curriculum (2014) as the basis for their planning in the core and foundation subjects. The leadership team and subject leaders are responsible for monitoring the curriculum and its provision to ensure that statutory programmes of work are being taught and teaching is being pitched appropriately to enabling pupils to achieve end of year expectations or exceed these. English, Maths and Phonics will be taught as discrete subjects. Maths, English and KS1 Phonics will be taught every morning (with a few exceptions due to the timetabling constraints). Teachers will also ensure there are opportunities for children to practise and apply their basic skills of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. Teachers are encouraged to develop cross curricular links within the foundation subjects and where possible plan from the children's interests. The Sounds-Write programme will be used by teachers and Learning Support Assistants to teach Phonics and spelling.

For the teaching of R.E. teachers will follow the Liverpool Agreed Syllabus.

### Expectations of all

Setting the tone for a purposeful learning environment is critical. Children need a structured, supportive and stimulating environment in which to learn and progress.

- Punctuality and regular attendance are essential. Any concerns about a pupil's attendance or punctuality should be discussed with Mrs Garnett, the school's Welfare Officer.

- Lessons should begin promptly with children entering the room in an orderly manner, as instructed by the teacher. Routines should be clearly established so the children know what is expected of them and the teacher is able to begin the lesson promptly.
- At the start of the day an appropriate task should be ready for the pupils to begin. This should be related to developing or practising of basic skills. The start of the day may also be used as an opportunity to give children time to respond to the teacher's marking from the previous day.
- Children should be taught and encouraged to take responsibility for their learning environment and ensure it is left tidy at the end of the lesson.
- Seating arrangements should be carefully planned by the teacher. Children will usually be seated according to ability in English and Maths. In other lessons the seating should be planned to suit the activity and also to give the children the opportunity to work both independently and collaboratively.

### **The Principles of Teaching and Learning at Greenbank – The Key Elements**

Lessons which are well structured and well-planned create a purpose to learning. All lessons delivered at Greenbank should include the following key elements to ensure high quality teaching and learning. New teachers will have opportunities to observe good practice in the school. This will ensure they fully understand the key elements of lessons at Greenbank and will enable them to embed them in their everyday practice.

#### **Key Element 1- Learning Objectives**

The learning objective is an outcome statement which captures specifically what knowledge, skills or understanding pupils should be able to demonstrate by the end of the lesson/ series of lessons.

- Learning objectives will be shared, explained and displayed in child friendly language.
- The Learning objective is written or projected onto the board by the teacher from the outset of the lesson.
- The Learning objective is displayed in children's books; typed and stuck into a child's book, written by child on their work or printed onto a worksheet.
- The Learning objective will be shared with the children as a WALT (We are learning to)

#### **For learning objectives to be taught effectively, teachers will:**

- make the learning objective explicit and check the children understand what is meant by that;
- focus on the expected outcome. Move away from saying 'Today we are doing' and instead say 'By the end of today's lesson you will be able to/know/understand. . .'
- refer to learning objectives: at the start of the lesson, during the lesson and in the plenary;
- use questioning and explanation to check children know exactly what they are going to learn and how they are going to do it.

#### **Key Element 2- Success Criteria**

The purpose of the success criteria is to describe and show children what their work will look like when the learning objective has been achieved. Teachers should use the success criteria to ensure all children are clear about how they will achieve the learning intention.

- Success criteria is given as a WILF (What I'm looking for) or shown as a WAGOLL (What a good one looks like).
- The WILF or WAGOLL should be displayed for the children to follow during the lesson or drawn up with the children. This may also be presented in the form of a marking check list or a marking ladder.

- Success criteria should be written in child friendly language that can be understood by all children and differentiated where necessary to allow children of all abilities to make progress and achieve.
- Children will be able to use the success criteria to self-assess their own work.
- Children are to be reminded of the success criteria during the lesson.
- Where possible children's work is used by the teacher to illustrate the success criteria in action and as a model to other children

### **Key Element 3- Differentiation**

Differentiation takes into account the needs of all learners and is the process by which differences between learners are accommodated. Differences between learners can be classified in the following terms:

- Readiness to learn
- Learning needs
- Interest

Effective differentiation ensures that all pupils have the best possible chance of learning. Pupils should be challenged appropriately enabling them to make good progress. Teachers and Learning Support Assistants should remember that individual pupils have different needs, related to influences both within and beyond the classroom. They should also be aware of the needs of specific groups such as:

- children with disabilities and/or special educational needs (SEND);
- Pupil Premium (Free School Meals and other vulnerable children);
- Looked after children;
- children with English as an additional language;
- pupils who are considered to be More Able or displaying a talent in a particular area/subject.

In addition to the groups above, teachers at Greenbank are also likely to teach children who:

- are new to the country with little or no English language;
- are refugees/ asylum seekers who may have witnessed traumatic events;
- have received little or no prior schooling.

### **Equal Opportunities and Special Needs**

All members of staff are responsible for ensuring that all children regardless of their race, religion, gender or ability are recognised for the unique and valuable contribution they bring to the life of the school. All children should feel safe, valued and be able to learn.

Children of all abilities are entitled to experience all parts of the curriculum, in learning situations that allow them to be successful and fulfill their potential.

Teachers will work alongside the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and the Senior Leadership Team to identify the individual needs of pupils with SEND and provide appropriate learning responses to these. Where needed specialist outside agencies such as Educational Psychologists will undertake diagnostic tests to establish children's needs and will also guide teachers as to how to differentiate work to meet individual requirements.

### **In planning and teaching teachers will:**

- provide activities which take into account the differing abilities of the pupils in their class and the needs of individual pupils;
- show awareness of the child's current achievements and attainment;
- plan activities which allow each individual child to make progress;

- match the lesson/activity to the need of the individual/group;
- help the child to see and understand the relevance of what they are being asked to do.

Differentiation can take many different forms, but can often be grouped into **differentiation by process** (how children learn) or **differentiation by content** (what students learn).

There is not a definite list of what differentiation entails, but the following examples illustrate the different ways in which a teacher can differentiate a lesson in order to meet the needs of all pupils.

At Greenbank we would expect to see a range of strategies being used by the teacher and for them to use their professional judgement to evaluate whether their methods of differentiation have been successful in a lesson or whether they need to be amended or refined in their future teaching.

### **Types of differentiation:**

- **Task**  
This is one of the core methods of differentiation. Differentiation by task, involves setting different tasks for pupils of different abilities. This is highly effective as it allows the teacher to teach one overall objective to the whole class, yet at the same time match the task closely to the differing abilities of the children within the class. If the tasks set are pitched appropriately and skillfully to meet the differing needs of the learners then pupils will make good progress.
- **The VAK Approach**  
Research shows that many children have a preferred or dominant style of learning, whilst others have a mixed or evenly balanced blend of the three.
  - **visual** by seeing and reading;
  - **auditory** by listening and speaking;
  - **kinesthetic** by touching and doing.
 To ensure that all children are able to access and enjoy their learning teachers should plan lessons which include opportunities for children to learn through visual, auditory and kinesthetic experiences.
- **Collaborative learning**  
Working in groups allows pupils to develop other skills. For example it enables shy pupils to participate more confidently in class. Small, mixed-ability groups allow lower ability pupils to take advantage of peer support, whilst other pupils have the opportunity to explain and describe what they are doing which leads them to a deeper understanding of their learning. Grouping also allows roles (leader, scribe etc) to be allocated within the team which can cater to each member's skill set and learning needs.
- **Resources**  
Some pupils need additional or alternative resources to assist them with their learning. Many pupils will need to work with concrete objects and see visual representations, whilst other pupils are capable of working with abstract ideas and concepts.
- **Pace**  
Teachers should ensure time is used flexibly in order to meet all pupils' needs. Children who quickly grasp the work should not be held back because their classmates need to spend more time on the fundamentals of a topic. They can instead be allocated more challenging extension tasks in order to develop a more

rounded and deeper understanding of the subject matter or even progress onto more challenging work/objectives.

- **Questioning**

Differentiation by dialogue is often used in the classroom. The teacher must identify which pupils need explanations in simple language and which pupils can engage in dialogue at a more sophisticated level. The teacher may also employ targeted questioning with varying degrees of challenge which will produce a range of responses. Verbal support and encouragement also plays a crucial part in this technique.

- **Support**

Teachers will decide the appropriate level of support to give individual children or groups of children. All children should have the opportunity to work in a small group with an adult during the course of a week and also have regularly opportunities to work independently.

- **Assessment**

Pupils will be continually assessed throughout a lesson so that the teaching and other methods of differentiation can be continuously adjusted according to the learners' needs. Effective differentiation in the classroom is an on-going and flexible process which recognises progress and areas for improvement.

#### **Key Element 4 – Engagement**

Engagement is when all learners are participating in the lesson or activity. When this is done well pupils become absorbed in what they are doing and are not distracted by what is happening around them. This may also be referred to as the child being 'in flow'. When learners are fully engaged they become more proactive and begin to lead their own learning.

##### **To engage pupils teachers will:**

- take into account children's concentration span, allowing children to actively engage and participate in all parts of the lesson and ensure they are not sitting passively for too long;
- recognise that children learn in different ways;
- provide a wide range of multi-sensory activities which will appeal to visual, auditory and kinesthetic learners;
- know their pupils – their interests, hobbies and ambitions;
- use information about their children's interests, knowledge and skills when planning lessons;
- provide activities and questions which provide a 'parachute' into the lesson and 'hook' the children. (Examples can be found in the Outstanding Teaching Intervention file and on the CD which accompanies the file);
- set work at an appropriate level which all learners can access;
- give children more ownership of their learning and opportunities to lead this;
- seek to become an activator and prompter where teacher input is minimal and the learner's input is maximised;
- facilitate learning experiences where the pupils are intrinsically motivated.

#### **Key Element 5 – Talk for Learning**

At Greenbank we believe that talking is an essential part of the learning process. Talking is the act of articulating our thoughts and understanding, and in doing so it forces us to organise our thoughts and therefore deepens our understanding.

**Teachers will place speaking at the heart of the learning process by providing regular structured and unstructured opportunities for children to talk.**

Opportunities for Talk for Learning may include:

- individual feedback on a one to one basis (pupil to pupil, teacher to pupil);
- talking partners – to share and rehearse ideas, articulate ideas;
- presenting work/ projects to the class;
- collaborative working with a partner or in a small group (sharing, allocating responsibilities, problem solving);
- class discussions/ debates both formal and informal;
- role play/ hot seating;
- drama lessons;
- presentations – to different audiences (own class, another class, parents);
- participating in productions and performances.

Participation in speaking activities does not come easily to some pupils and speaking skills should be taught in progression as set out in the National Curriculum. Teachers should work alongside their pupils modelling talk for learning. This is of particular importance for pupils who have delayed language acquisition or have English as an additional language. Children should know and understand that their talk is valued as much as their written work.

### **Talk for Writing**

Many children find it difficult to organise and articulate their thoughts, particularly when it comes to writing. The Talk for Writing programme is to be used to deliver the majority of English teaching at Greenbank from Nursery through to Year 6. The structure of the programme enables children to imitate the language they need for a particular topic orally before reading and analysing it, then writing their own version.

### **Key Element 6 – Challenge**

If pupils are regularly given opportunities to tackle challenging activities then they will develop high levels of resilience, confidence and independence.

At Greenbank we define a ‘challenge’ as a problem which is ‘offering interesting difficulties’ (definition from The Oxford Concise Dictionary).

When creating challenges there is a careful balance to be made between too little and too much challenge. If the challenge is too low or easily mastered the children will lose interest; if it is too difficult it will lead to disinterest and demotivation.

### **Why should tasks be demanding or stimulating?**

Tasks which have just the right amount of challenge:

- generate a sense of achievement when mastered;
- promote competition with others or with one’s self;
- demand creative thinking;
- require learners to make links between knowledge and experience and to apply their new knowledge to new situations;
- help learners to develop resilience and confidence by experiencing the feeling of success and achievement;
- allow the teacher to see where their pupils are struggling, identify the next steps, and provide appropriate intervention.

### **What constitutes a challenging task?**

An appropriately challenging task:

- requires the application of knowledge, skills and experience;
- has solutions which are not obvious;
- requires thinking skills;

- encourages creative solutions – not just one;
- has ‘just the right’ amount of difficulty; success is within grasp, but not without effort;
- There is recognition of the point of success, and an appreciation of the effort needed to get there.

### **What skills are needed in order to be able to create challenging tasks?**

Skills needed by the teacher to create a challenging task are:

- an understanding of the learners’ current knowledge, skills and understanding;
- sound subject knowledge;
- the ability to identify an appropriate context for the task;
- an understanding of the steps required to achieve success with the task;
- the ability to promote thinking by asking questions that challenge understanding;
- the ability to recognise misconceptions, and to ask the right questions to eliminate them.

### **Constructing challenging tasks**

When constructing tasks, it is useful to ask these questions:

- What knowledge, skills and understanding are needed for this task?
- What is the challenge in the task?
- Do the children understand that there is more than one right answer?
- Is it clear to the children that they can succeed, and that the task is not impossible for them?
- Is the context relevant and engaging for the children?  
A challenge should engage pupils. It should not be a tedious task which if completed successfully will merely fulfil the success criteria.
- Are there opportunities for the children to think creatively?
- Do children have an element of choice?

In order to develop resilience and confidence children should be regularly exposed to challenges in a supportive environment. Children will often choose to challenge themselves when given choices. One of the ways we do this at Greenbank is to offer the children the opportunity to ‘go for bronze, silver or gold’. The bronze challenge will match the teacher’s intended learning outcomes for that lesson whilst the silver and gold challenge will go beyond that. The children feel comfortable as they are able to choose the level of their challenge and they will often select the silver or gold challenge. These challenges can also be easily differentiated with each group being set their own bronze, silver or gold targets.

### **Key Element 7 – Questioning**

The frequency and nature of interaction between teacher and pupils is highly significant. Effective questioning will assist children in their learning by stimulating thinking and helping them to consolidate their understanding. Teachers should use questioning and discussion to assess the effectiveness of their teaching and to promote pupils’ learning.

### **What is a good question?**

A good question is generally one that needs thinking about. Questions that are easy to answer don’t move learning on; they might indicate that learning has happened, or that at least something has been noticed, thought about or memorised, but they don’t promote learning.

### **How do questions promote learning?**

- good questions stimulate thinking, and often generate more questions to clarify understanding;
- good questions generate informative responses often revealing not only misconceptions and misunderstanding, but understanding and experience beyond that expected;
- good questions encourage learners to make links;
- good questions push learners to the limit of their understanding;
- good questions from pupils push teachers to the limits of their understanding too, and challenge them to find better ways of explaining;
- good questions offer opportunities for learners to hear others' answers to questions and it helps them to reflect on their own understanding.

### **For questioning to be effective teachers should:**

- use questioning as a form of assessment for learning, to establish what individual children know, understand and can do;
- use questions to identify specific misconceptions a pupil may have;
- use open ended questions;
- provide ample time for pupils to think through their answers before responding;
- make children feel secure by giving advance warning of a question e.g. 'In two minutes time I am going to ask you . . .';
- allow pupils to explore and articulate their thinking by giving them time to discuss their responses in pairs or groups.

### **Questioning can fail if:**

- questioning techniques are inappropriate for the material;
- there is an unconscious bias towards most able or more demanding pupils;
- questions are not targeted to different ability groups appropriately;
- pupils do not have enough thinking time;
- pupils fear being seen by their peers to be wrong;
- questions are too difficult;
- questions are too easy.

### **Questioning is likely to succeed when:**

- all pupils get a chance to answer;
- pupils can see how others are thinking;
- teachers gain information about thinking and learning;
- pupils have time to consider their answers;
- pupils have time to discuss and follow up on their answers;
- pupils feel safe to answer;
- it stimulates further thinking and more questions.

Teachers should use a range of question types, both lower and higher order, remembering that the higher order questions are the ones that promote learning.

### **Examples of lower order questions may include:**

- **Remembering**  
What is a noun?  
Can you count to 20?  
What happened when we heated the wax?
- **Understanding**  
Which note is higher?

Which words tell us that the character is sad?

**Examples of higher order questions may include:**

- **Applying**  
Given what you have just learned, how could you devise a better way of doing this experiment?  
How might you use this technique to solve another problem?
- **Analysing**  
Why did this event in the story prove to be the turning point?  
How did the author create suspense in this part of the story?
- **Evaluating**  
Which material is better for this purpose?  
Which method of calculation do you think is more efficient?

Effective question also requires teachers to use differing response techniques such as:

- targeted questions at individuals and groups;
- “No hands up”;
- mini whiteboards for pupils to record their ideas, thoughts or answers;
- group discussions and feedback.

**Key Element 8 – Feedback**

Feedback is given by teachers to pupils to inform them of their learning; what they are learning, how successful they have been and how they can improve.

All pupils should receive regular and clear feedback which enhances their learning. Good quality feedback allows pupils to understand their own learning. Feedback given to children will recognise their achievements and the effort they have put into their work. The feedback given will also make pupils aware of what they can do to improve and and make progress.

Feedback can be verbal or written. Written feedback will be in the agreed format as set out in the school’s Marking and Presentation Policy.

Feedback is effective when:

- assessment for learning is embedded in everyday practice and is used to inform teaching and learning;
- pupils know what they are learning and why;
- pupils understand the success criteria and know ‘What a good one looks like’ (WAGOLL) or ‘What I’m looking for’ (WILF);
- pupils are clear about how they need to improve;
- pupils are given focused time to respond to the teacher’s feedback;
- marking focuses on the lesson objective and success criteria, and indicates what pupils have done well and what they need to improve on/correct;

**Key Element 9 – Assessment**

At Greenbank we use both format and summative assessments.

**Formative Assessment** is an ongoing form of assessment used to monitor children’s learning on a day to day, lesson by lesson basis. It is used by teachers at Greenbank to improve their teaching and help children’s improve their learning.

Formative assessment in school is commonly referred to as **Assessment for Learning**. It is the process of identifying what the learner has or has not achieved. This information is used to plan the next steps in teaching.

**Effective Assessment for Learning involves:**

- the sharing of lesson objectives with pupils;
- helping pupils know and recognise the criteria for success;
- providing feedback and marking that helps pupils to identify how to improve;
- self-assessment by the pupil to discover areas they need to improve;
- the effective use of questioning to assess progress;
- helping pupils identify their strengths and weaknesses and target areas that need work;
- teachers recognising where pupils are struggling and then addressing problems and misconceptions immediately.

**Summative Assessment** is when an overall judgement is made about the attainment of a pupil at a given moment in time. The purpose of summative assessments is to measure the attainment of each individual pupil in reading, writing, spelling and mathematics. This information is reported to the school's Assessment Manager who uses this information to track each individual pupil's attainment and progress. This information is also used to measure how individual pupils, significant groups (Pupil Premium, EAL, SEND) and year groups are performing against a national benchmark.

There is a statutory requirement for children to undertake nationally agreed summative assessments at key points in their schooling. At present these are:

- NFER tests on entry to Reception – beginning of Autumn term
- Year 1 Phonics check – Summer term
- Year 2 SATs – Summer term
- Year 6 SATs – Summer term

In addition summative assessments take place at Greenbank three times a year (December, March and June). To make these summative assessments teachers will use a combination of these methods:

- Formative – to help children to progress;
- Diagnostic – to identify specific strengths and weaknesses;
- Summative – to summarise children's abilities, attainment and progress.

The Assessment Manager will inform teachers of the test materials they are to use so there is standardisation across the school. All teachers will use National Curriculum objectives in reading, writing and maths as a basis for their judgements when making teacher assessments. Opportunities will be given for cross moderation to ensure there is standardisation between classes, year groups and other schools. There will be occasions when the system used for assessments has to be amended or refined. This information will be passed and explained to teachers in staff meetings and through staff training.