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Morley Memorial Primary School Teaching and Learning Policy

Introduction

Teacher commitments and beliefs and teachers' collective self-efficacy are amongst the greatest influences on children's achievement[1]. Research indicates that where teaching is highly effective it can produce a difference in achievement (when compared with less effective teaching) equivalent to one year of progress. Highly effective teaching is achieved through 'inspired and passionate teachers'[2] delivering thoughtfully structured lessons in which ideas are communicated clearly.

As well as affirming our commitment to developing teacher expertise, this teaching and learning policy aims to set out what we believe highly effective practice to be at Morley. It describes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning and the associated procedures for planning, assessing and reporting. (See our Marking and Feedback policy for further detail.) It is based upon the principles of 'Visible Learning' (a synthesis of a large body of research meta-analyses) alongside other relevant pedagogical research and texts.

Ethos

For highly effective learning to take place, learners must feel safe and supported and must develop appropriate learning behaviours and dispositions. **The combination of effective teaching and effective learning leads to sustained progress over time**. Excellent teaching should nurture curiosity and develop the whole child, including personal and social skills, academic ability and, crucially, 'learning dispositions'. Learning dispositions are habits of thinking cultivated over time that promote pupil engagement and lead to further progress. Our curriculum is much wider than the statutory National Curriculum: through effective teaching we aim to nurture the development of attributes such as aspiration, kindness, respect and creativity as well as developing knowledge and deep understanding of a wide range of subjects.

We ask that all teachers and teaching assistants who choose to work with us share our belief that *all children can make progress* and to commit to developing a trusting classroom climate where pupils feel secure and able to learn, and ***both teachers and learners are clear about what is being learnt and how.*** This is the essence of 'visible learning'. The core purpose of the work of all school staff is to have a positive impact on children's social development, learning habits and academic achievement.

Learning Dispositions

Excellent learners apply effective habits of thinking, understand how to learn, are able to understand and explain progress, and seek, receive and act on feedback[3]. At Morley, we encourage everyone in our community (including staff, parents and children) to use a consistent vocabulary when talking about the characteristics of effective learners. We believe that learners learn best when they cultivate the following habits:

- *Curiosity* – children are given the opportunity to ask and answer deep and complex questions and have access to teaching, curricula and resources which inspire meaningful engagement

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[1] http://www.visiblelearningmetax.com/Influences
[2] *Visible Learning Plus Foundation Workbook, p.36*
[3] *Visible Learning Plus Foundation Workbook*, p.19

with their topics (including the opportunity to carry out their own research and investigations, where appropriate)

- *Courage* – there is a positive classroom climate which encourages challenge, celebrates effort and teaches children to view mistakes as opportunities for learning; children are supported to engage in new experiences, including performing in front of others (for example, when participating in the Shakespeare Schools' Festival)
- *Resilience* – children are encouraged to persist when learning activities are challenging, to try new strategies and to welcome feedback from teaching staff and peers
- *Motivation* – children are explicitly taught to appreciate the value and purpose of learning (both generally and in specific relation to the content of individual lessons or units) and to recognise that effective learning involves hard work; they are encouraged to set ambitious goals and work towards them
- *Collaboration* – there is a balance in provision which allows for independent work and genuine opportunities for collaboration; children are explicitly taught how to work effectively as a group and age-appropriate guidance and structures are put in place to support them (such as 'rules for talk' or 'reciprocal teaching roles'); there is an emphasis upon oracy and a classroom culture in which children habitually give and receive peer feedback
- *Reflection* – children are encouraged to reflect upon their own learning and use this knowledge to further improve their work; they are taught, in ways appropriate to their age and stage of development, how to become 'assessment-capable'[4] and recognise their own progress and areas for development within lessons and over time

Conditions for learning

In addition to cultivating the habits outlined above, we believe that learners learn best when the following conditions are consistently met:

- Children have the opportunity to demonstrate progress in a range of ways
- There is a positive classroom climate with high levels of engagement and concentration as well as relational trust[5] between all members of the school community
- Children have the opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills and master these both within the lesson and over time

High quality teaching

We believe that high quality teaching is characterised by clarity, coherence and responsiveness to learners' needs. In the best lessons, we see a sense of 'flow'; there are high levels of engagement and motivation, there is high quality discussion (with pupils doing much of the talking) and teachers use their planning flexibly alongside their expert knowledge to address misconceptions or respond to unexpected progress. At Morley, we expect our 'inspired and passionate' teachers to consider the following aspects of effective teaching in most lessons:

1. *Positive classroom climate*

There is a positive climate for learning which is fair and there is a clear sense of mutual trust and respect. Children understand they are there to learn and be challenged and demonstrate behaviour which enables this to happen. Displays and other resources in the learning environments are used

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[4] *Visible Learning Plus Foundation Workbook,* p.19
[5] *Visible Learning Plus Foundation Workbook*, p.45

to support and enable learners. When entering the classroom, learners are engaged quickly and there is a clear focus which they can explain. All members of the classroom community are engaged in and committed to learning: additional adults make a significant and positive contribution to the children's progress.

2. *High quality talk*
Research by Neil Mercer[6], Robin Alexander and many others, including organisations such as Voice 21[7], has emphasised the essential role of oracy in advancing pupils' thinking: "the function of talk in classrooms is cognitive and cultural as well as social"[8]. The domination of teacher talk can lead to lower levels of engagement and so effective teachers "engage in dialogue, not monologue."[9] Teachers are encouraged to be "activators"[10] rather than "facilitators", modelling, directing and scaffolding high-quality talk. Wherever possible, teachers are encouraged to adopt a dialogic approach with rich questions and talk which probes children's thinking and understanding.

3. *High expectations and challenge*
Lessons are aspirational in tone, instilling a motivated and resilient attitude: children are prepared to rise to the challenge that the learning may bring. This is clearly articulated by the teacher, who sets challenging tasks[11] that demand both surface level knowledge and deep understanding. In order for learning to take place, the learner needs, at some point, to be in a state of 'not knowing' but having a desire and commitment to find out more. Activities should therefore be stimulating, encompassing first-hand experiences and, where appropriate, provide opportunities for real-life problem-solving.

4. *Expert knowledge and teacher clarity*
 Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge and teaching strategies are carefully chosen to enable children to attain the success criteria. Teachers pay "deliberate attention"[12] to articulating the learning intentions and success criteria with clarity. They use expert knowledge to identify and address potential barriers to learning so that all children make progress. Planning and teaching recognises the needs of all pupils including vulnerable pupils and also the most able; planning focuses upon pupil progress but is used flexibly enough to allow teachers to respond to unexpected progress or misconceptions.

5. *Explicit teaching of learning strategies and dispositions*
Effective teachers understand "the critical role of teaching appropriate learning strategies"[13] as well as making explicit reference to relevant learning dispositions (which are also displayed in the learning environment). This teaching of metacognition should be embedded within meaningful and challenging learning activities; as well as curriculum content children must be taught "effective procedures for learning the content" which over time are internalised into "productive 'habits of

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[6] https://www.cam.ac.uk/research/discussion/why-teach-oracy
[7] https://voice21.org/
[8] https://robinalexander.org.uk/dialogic-teaching/
[9] *Visible Learning Plus Foundation Workbook*, p.61
[10] *Visible Learning Plus Foundation Workbook*, p.36
[11] Fisher, Frey & Hattie (2017), *Teaching Literacy in the Visible Learning Classroom*, p.36
[12] Fisher, Frey & Hattie (2017), *Teaching Literacy in the Visible Learning Classroom*, p.36
[13] Fisher, Frey & Hattie (2017), *Teaching Literacy in the Visible Learning Classroom*, p.36

mind' that they can apply on their own to learn new concepts"[14].Consideration is given at the planning stage to the cultivation of positive learning behaviours; these behaviour expectations are well-established in the classroom environment.

6. *Opportunities for deliberate practice*
In order to master a skill, deliberate practice is an essential requirement because "spaced and […] interleaved retrieval practice helps long-term memory consolidation."[15]Teachers plan "multiple opportunities"[16] for children to concentrate on and practice key skills and children can explain the value of deliberate practice in improving and refining their skills. Teachers use direct instruction in combination with deliberate practice in order to promote "acquisition, consolidation and transfer of learning through intentional lesson design that uses an explicit approach"[17]. Persistent effort is celebrated, using the vocabulary of our learning dispositions – teachers praise 'resilient' and 'motivated' learners.

7. *Rapid, formative feedback*
Formative feedback is used to raise achievement. Teachers consider where the children are going in their learning, how they are getting on and what their next steps might be[18]: children receive feedback accordingly, which moves their learning on. Feedback is given at an appropriate stage (task, process or self-regulation) for the phase of learning taking place: children may receive feedback on how well a task has been performed, whether the strategies they used were effective or how they might identify what to do next to progress. Whilst descriptive praise may be used to encourage desired behaviours and motivate learners, feedback is more frequently focussed upon the learning, rather than praising the individual.

8. *Reflection*
Teachers and children evaluate the effectiveness of the lesson and their learning. Learners are supported in assessing the success of their work, ascertaining whether they have attained their goals, and identifying targets for improvement. They use age-appropriate tools to support them in this, such as success criteria or rubrics. Children are able to articulate *what* they have learned and also *how* they have learned. With support, they are able to reflect on the strategies they have used and identify where to go next. Lessons have a good pace but routinely include opportunities for reflection and self-evaluation to allow mastery.

Teachers habitually evaluate their own practice, recognising that "their fundamental task is to evaluate the effect of their teaching on students' learning and achievement"[19]. They see themselves as 'evaluators' and 'change agents' - capable of extending their knowledge, refining their practice (in response to pupil feedback and assessment data) and bringing about meaningful development in teaching practice. There is an established culture of openness to feedback from children, colleagues and leaders. Procedures such as peer reviews and working groups allow for professional dialogue and collaboration between teachers, whilst teacher research 'impact cycles'

[14] Nuttall (2007) *The Hidden Lives of Learners,* p.163
[15] Didau & Rose (2016) *What Every Teacher Needs to Know About Psychology,* p.118
[16] Fisher, Frey & Hattie (2017), *Teaching Literacy in the Visible Learning Classroom*, p.36
[17] Fisher, Frey & Hattie (2017), *Teaching Literacy in the Visible Learning Classroom*, p.73
[18] *Visible Learning Plus Foundation Workbook, p.45*
[19] *Visible Learning Plus Foundation Workbook*, p.57

gather evidence to support teachers in evaluating the impact their teaching is having on children's learning.

Planning for progress

Effective planning provides the "architecture for pupils' learning"[20] and, given the high effect size of 'teacher clarity'[21], it is essential that lessons are thoughtfully structured. Effective teachers are adept at "organising the ideas in a lesson plan in a coherent way so that students will understand and remember"[22] - the planning process formalises and records teachers' professional decisions about how to sequence their teaching appropriately to maximise progress.

Effective lesson planning requires:
- a coherently sequenced curriculum
- in-depth subject knowledge and understanding of relevant pedagogy
- careful selection of material according to information about children's existing understanding (through judicious use of formative and summative assessment analysis)
- a culture of teacher collaboration and critique

There are three critical questions which all planning should address:
1) ***Where are they going?*** *(*What are the desired levels of performance at the end of the lesson or teaching sequence?)
2) ***How are they going?*** (What are the current levels of performance and/or prior achievement and how will this be built upon?)
3) ***Where to next?***[23] (What is the progression from this point?)

Lesson planning should begin with a solid understanding of what the pupils already know. For those who are not yet meeting age-related expectations, strategies to accelerate progress need to be considered. The target is for teaching to close the gap. This will require consideration of children's knowledge but also, crucially, the learning process.

By planning targeted learning the teacher should have a clear sense of what is to be learned (learning intention) and how they will know if the desired learning has been achieved (success criteria) and this will need to be shared with the learners themselves. Learning intentions and success criteria "contribute greatly to teacher clarity", but only if they are "adequately and consistently communicated to students."[24] Learning intentions do not always need to be shared at the beginning of the lesson but children must be clear about what they are learning, why and how.

Medium term planning

Medium term plans provide an overview of the curriculum content covered within each topic. Where possible, they should include a 'WOW' event at the beginning to inspire and enthuse

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[20] Myatt, (2018), *The Curriculum: Gallimaufry to Coherence*, p.38
[21] http://www.visiblelearningmetax.com/Influences
[22] Willingham, (2009), *Why Don't Students Like School,* p.66
[23] *Visible Learning Plus Foundation Workbook, p.45*
[24] Fisher, Frey & Hattie (2017), *Teaching Literacy in the Visible Learning Classroom*, p.49

children about the topic and a planned opportunity for children to present and share their learning towards the end.

Maths is planned using 'White Rose' teaching sequences and English is planned with high quality texts at the heart of most units and 'No-Nonsense Spelling' teaching sequences throughout the year in Years 2 - 6. Early Years and Year 1 and 2 use the 'Letters and Sounds' scheme to plan phonics sessions. Objectives for all subjects are drawn from the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. Medium term planning is stored centrally on the Google Drive.

Long-term planning

The school curriculum long-term planning ensures that from Early Years right to the end of Year 6 children are taught the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum, the National Curriculum, the Cambridge Agreed Syllabus for RE and the Cambridgeshire Personal Development programme curriculum. We endeavour to make links between subjects and often teach cross-curricular topics which make connections between subjects and prior experiences to build up knowledge and skills over time. Topics are chosen to support the teaching of specific skills as well as to inspire curiosity and to stimulate creativity. Subject leaders liaise with colleagues to ensure that the medium-term plans produced provide appropriate progression. All long term plans are published on the school website and working documents are stored on the Google Drive.

Short term planning

We are mindful of the workload challenges detailed in the Independent Teacher Workload Report 'Eliminating Unnecessary Workload Around Planning and Teaching Resources' (March 2016)[25]. Effective planning underpins high quality teaching but should not be unnecessarily burdensome. Good quality medium-term planning has been constructed, reviewed and refined to provide sufficient detail for most teachers to deliver effective lessons. Consideration will need to be given to target groups, and the range of needs specific to the class but separate written daily plans do not need to be produced.

Marking and feedback

The purpose of marking is to provide the child with effective feedback about their work: how far did they meet the learning objective and what can they do to move closer to achieving the desired goal? As with planning, the three crucial questions to address are "W*here am I going? How am I going? Where to next?*"[26] Feedback should be relevant, timely and meaningful: "just in time, just for me, information delivered when and where it can have the most effect"[27]. This may be given verbally or in writing. Teachers use the code 'VF' to indicate where this has happened verbally.

Feedback in lessons

Where appropriate, it can be helpful to give feedback during the lesson where the feedback can bring about changes before a task is finished. It is essential, however, that feedback is tailored to match the children's progress through a sequence of learning: "over time the quantity and frequency of feedback should be reduced to allow students to internalise the procedures for

[25] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/511257/Eliminating-unnecessary-workload-around-planning-and-teaching-resources.pdf
[26] *Visible Learning Plus Foundation Workbook*, p.45
[27] *Visible Learning Plus Foundation Workbook*, p.45

successfully retaining and transferring what they have learnt"[28]. This avoids children's over-reliance on teacher feedback negatively impacting upon the learning process: "Feedback that is given too immediately and too frequently can lead learners to overly depend on it as an aid during practice."[29] Teachers use their professional judgement to strike a balance between effectively guiding pupils with clear, immediate feedback and allowing sufficient independence for real learning to take place.

During lessons, some immediate feedback will be required to ensure a high standard of written work is produced and all adults are expected to support children through intervention marking, addressing 'non-negotiables' such as spelling, handwriting and grammar in writing or systematic recording in maths.

In-depth or 'close-the-gap' marking

We value marking where the children have a chance to respond and improve their work. Therefore we focus our marking in these key areas. **This means that not all work will be marked in detail,** in line with recommendations from the 'Eliminating unnecessary workload around marking' Independent Review (March 2016)[30]**.** Others may be self-marked, marked by a partner or discussed as a whole class.

When we use in-depth or close-the-gap marking, we use a green highlighter, tick or double tick the part of the work which best meets the learning objective. We indicate with an orange highlighter where some improvement can be made, then make suggestions for this improvement.

Responding to feedback

Teachers should plan explicit opportunities and time for children to respond to in-depth marking. Where they expect children to respond, teachers place a symbol in the child's book which correlates with one of a range of activities displayed on the whiteboard during feedback response time. The activity and associated feedback will be tailored to the particular needs of the child, depending on their stage within the sequence of learning and will provide task, process or self-regulatory prompts[31].

Types of Feedback

1. *Task prompt*

This type of feedback is directive: it identifies how well a task has been completed and provides specific guidance on what to improve and how.

For example, *"You have not started your second sentence with a capital letter. You need to correct this so that all your sentences begin with capital letters."*
"You have not sequenced the events correctly in your third paragraph. Your next step is to go back to your plan and check the order of events before you rewrite this section."

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[28] Didau & Rose, (2016), *What Every Teacher Needs to Know about Psychology,* p.85
[29] Soderstrom & Bjork, (2013) 'Learning Versus Performance: An Integrative Review' in *Perspectives on psychological science : a journal of the Association for Psychological Science*
[30]https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/511256/Eliminating-unnecessary-workload-around-marking.pdf
[31] *Visible Learning Into Action Foundation Workbook,* p.49

2. *Process prompt*

When the pupil has some degree of proficiency, this type of prompt is suitable to provide some scaffolding for further improvement - it suggests strategies (or resources) to help with refining work, rather than specifying actions or providing solutions. For example, *"Remember to check for capital letters at the beginning of every sentence - use our proof-reading checklist to help." "Remember that we are working on sequencing - can you identify where this has gone wrong? Use your plan to help you."*

3. *Self-regulatory prompt*

This type of feedback supports students to "monitor, direct and regulate actions towards the learning goal"[32]; it assumes a high degree of proficiency and acts as a reminder to use existing strategies to reflect upon and refine their own learning. For example, *"Do you think your sentences have met all the success criteria, including our non-negotiables?" "Self-assess your draft using the success criteria and the exemplars. What might you do differently next time?"*

Aims of Assessment

Assessment is integral to effective planning and teaching. It is the "process of gaining insight into what our pupils know, understand and can do as a result of what we have taught them"[33] and it gives class teachers vital information about children's starting points. This enables all adults working with children to provide the necessary teaching to reinforce and extend their knowledge, understanding and skills in a coherent, meaningful way which is appropriate for their ability level. Assessment identifies misconceptions and points toward next steps, maximising the opportunities for progress. **The primary purpose of all of our assessment is to inform our planning and teaching .**

Specifically, assessment at Morley achieves the following aims:
- To identify the areas of the curriculum on which particular individuals, groups or cohorts require further teaching or support.
- To identify children's existing prior knowledge before beginning a new activity.
- To judge the effectiveness of a block of teaching.
- To help teachers, parents and children track progress over time.
- To empower children with information about their own progress in order to engage them further in the learning process, creating 'assessment-capable' learners.

Forms of Assessment

At Morley we use a range of assessment strategies and a mixture of both formative and summative assessment.

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment refers to assessment activities which yield information "to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities [...] such assessments become formative when the evidence is actually used to adapt the teaching to meet the needs of students"[34]. As such, formative assessment is ongoing and evident in most lessons, helping shape children's

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[32] *Visible Learning Into Action Foundation Workbook,* p.49
[33] Myatt (2018) *The Curriculum: Gallimaufry to Coherence*, p.54
[34] Black & Wiliam (1998) *Inside the black box: Raising standards through classroom assessment*

understanding of the task or activity at the time. Careful planning, the sharing of learning objectives, pupil self-evaluation (including the use of success criteria and rubrics), targeted questioning and feedback all play an important role in formative assessment, which is often composed of informal observations made by school staff. Not all observations are recorded, as the teacher and teaching assistant will act on these assessments as and when necessary (often within the session or in the next lesson in the sequence of learning).

Summative Assessment (formal tests)
Summative assessments tend to take place at the end of an activity and demonstrate how much a child has understood about a topic.

National Statutory Tests (SATS) in English and Maths are currently taken at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. A statutory phonics assessment takes place in Year 1.

Additional standardised tests are used in Maths and Reading to provide additional evidence for assessing pupil progress. In some circumstances, teachers may use statistical tools to analyse data gathered from testing (such as measuring the effect size); it is important that *at least* a class of children are used as a sample group and that the tests are standardised in order for this analysis to be valid.

Alongside data from tests, teachers make overall summative judgements on pupils' achievements, based upon a range of evidence (including, for example, half-termly independent writing, assessed against a writing rubric). Assessment data is recorded on Target Tracker. The system is designed to be used for ongoing assessments against statements and for termly 'steps' updates. All teachers have a login which enables them to view, enter and analyse achievement data for their class, different groups and individual pupils.

Short term assessments: teachers need to know whether or not the children have learnt a specific objective in order to directly inform their next teaching. We encourage the children to be involved in this as self-assessment, setting short-term targets for themselves to address in the next lesson.

Medium term assessment: this is used to review progress over a unit of work, assessing a range of skills to set targets and priorities for teaching over the coming weeks and months.

Long-term assessments: both short and medium term assessments feed into summative assessments made on a termly basis and these are reported to parents on an annual basis.

Passing on work and assessments to the next teacher
All teachers have direct access to pupil achievement data through Target Tracker. This allows the teacher to look back at progress as well as attainment across all subjects. The use of Target Tracker to highlight achievement against 'key performance indicators' and additional criteria in English and Maths allows a teacher to view a pupil's particular strengths and areas for development as well as their overall achievement.

Reporting to parents and carers

We hold formal consultation evenings where parents and carers have the opportunity to make an appointment with their child's teacher to discuss their progress and development. In July, we hold an Open Evening where parents are invited to look at the whole school as a celebration of the children's achievements over the year and parents and carers receive an annual written report which is a combination of information from formative and summative assessments. This provides the parent with a clear and comprehensive statement of achievement.