

Teaching & Learning Policy

Aim - To provide teachers and teaching assistants with guidelines against which they can evaluate their own practice in order to achieve the most effective level of teaching and consequently, ensure that the children's learning potential is maximised.

These guidelines draw on the findings of the Hay McBer Report of June 2000 - 'Research into Teacher Effectiveness'.

Hay McBer found three main factors, within teachers' control, that significantly influence children's learning and rate of progress.

- Teaching Skills
- Professional Characteristics
- Classroom Climate

It was found that these three areas contribute in both distinctive and complementary ways in delivering value-added teaching.

Teaching Skills

Teaching skills are those techniques used continually throughout every lesson to involve, motivate and stimulate the children to learn. Hay McBer divided teaching skills into seven areas :- High Expectations, Planning, Methods & Strategies, Pupil Management, Time & Resource Management, Assessment, Homework.

HIGH EXPECTATIONS

Effective teachers set high expectations for all pupils and communicate them directly to the pupils.

Characteristics of effective teachers:-

1. The teacher encourages high standards of effort, accuracy and presentation.
2. The teacher uses differentiation appropriately (of input, output, resources, questioning, help given etc) to challenge all pupils in the class.
3. The teacher varies motivational strategies for different individuals.
4. The teacher provides opportunity for the child to take responsibility for his/her own learning.
5. The teacher draws on pupil experiences and relevant ideas.

PLANNING

Effective teachers set a clear framework and objective for each lesson. The lesson planning is done in the context of the broader curriculum and longer-term plans and pays attention to previous learning. Material is presented in small steps, differentiation is planned into the lesson and time is allowed to review the learning that has taken place.

Characteristics of effective teachers:-

1. The teacher communicates a clear plan and objective at the start of the lesson.
2. The teacher has the necessary materials and resources ready.
3. Lesson objectives are linked to the National Curriculum.
4. The TA is involved in the preparation of the lesson (where appropriate).
5. The teacher reviews what pupils have learnt at the end of the lesson.

METHODS & STRATEGIES

Effective teachers employ a variety of teaching strategies and techniques to engage pupils and keep them on task. They present information with clarity and enthusiasm. They do a great deal of direct instruction to the whole class, interspersed with individual and small group work. There is a great deal of interaction with the children and the teacher asks questions to develop learning and thinking skills and to monitor progress.

Characteristics of effective teachers:-

1. The teacher involves all the pupils in the lesson.
2. The teacher used a variety of activities/ / learning methods.
3. The teaching methods employed are appropriate to the lesson objective.
4. The teacher uses a variety of questioning techniques to probe pupils knowledge and understanding.
5. The teacher encourages the child to use a variety of problem-solving techniques.
6. The teacher gives clear instructions and explanations.
7. Practical activities have a clear purpose in improving pupil's understanding or achievement.
8. The teacher listens and responds to pupils.

PUPIL MANAGEMENT

Effective teachers have a clear strategy for pupil management. A sense of order prevails in the classroom and pupils feel safe and secure. The pupil management strategy is a means to an end: allowing maximum time for children to be focused on the task. Effective teachers establish and communicate clear boundaries for pupil behaviour. They exercise authority clearly and fairly.

Characteristics of effective teachers:-

1. The teacher keeps the pupils on task throughout the lesson.
2. Bad behaviour is corrected immediately.
3. The teacher praises good achievement and effort.
4. The teacher treats different children fairly.

TIME & RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The effective management of pupils, time, resources and support promotes good behaviour and effective learning. Effective teachers make full use of planned time, use a brisk pace and allocate their time fairly amongst pupils. Effective teachers start their lessons on time and finish crisply with a succinct review of learning. The classroom is an effective learning environment in which activities run smoothly, transitions are brief and little time is lost in getting organised. Effective teachers involve TAs and helpers in the lesson planning and execution of the lesson.

Characteristics of effective teachers:-

1. The teacher structures the lesson to use the time available well.
2. The lesson lasts for the appropriate time.
3. Appropriate learning resources are used to enhance pupils' opportunities.
4. The teacher uses an appropriate pace.
5. The teacher allocates his / her time fairly amongst pupils.

ASSESSMENT

Effective teachers employ a range of assessment methods and techniques to monitor pupils' understanding and work (questioning, observation, marking, testing etc). Effective teachers look for gains in learning, gaps in knowledge and areas of misunderstanding. They encourage pupils to judge the success of their own work and set themselves targets for improvement. They also offer critical and supportive feedback to pupils.

Characteristics of effective teachers:-

1. The teacher focuses on understanding & meaning, factual memory, skills mastery and applications in real-life settings.
2. The teacher uses a variety of assessment methods to assess understanding.
3. The teacher is able to recognise misconceptions and to rectify them.
4. There is evidence of pupils' written work having been marked or otherwise assessed.
5. The teacher encourages pupils to do better next time.

HOMEWORK

Effective teachers ensure that homework is integrated with class work, is tailored to individual needs and is regularly and constructively marked.

Characteristics of effective teachers:-

1. The teacher sets homework to either consolidate or extend the coverage of the lesson.
2. Previous homework is followed up in the lesson.
3. the teacher explains what learning objectives the children will gain from the homework set.

Professional Characteristics

Professional characteristics are deep-seated patterns of behaviour that a teacher displays. They are how the teacher does the job and have to do with self-image and values, the way the teacher habitually approaches situations and the motivation that drives performance. Hay McBer assigned these characteristics to five broad 'clusters' and stated that effective teachers have strengths in all five clusters but that different combinations of characteristics within each cluster can be equally effective. The five clusters were defined as :- Professionalism, Thinking, Planning & Setting Expectations, Leading, Relating to Others.

PROFESSIONALISM

There are four characteristics that describe this cluster:

1. **Respect for Others** - The effective teacher is concerned that everyone should treat pupils and all members of the school community with respect. Effective teachers value others and value the diversity in the school community and retain that respect even when sorely tried.
2. **Challenge & Support** - Effective teachers repeatedly express positive expectations and build pupils' self-esteem and belief that they can succeed as learners and in life.
3. **Confidence** - Effective teachers show confidence in most situations, expressing optimism about their own abilities and making an active contribution in meetings. They take a full part in moving the school forward and improving its effectiveness, drawing on their experience to help shape policies and

procedures. They have emotional resilience in dealing with challenging pupils and situations, drawing on the range of professional skills they have built up.

4. **Creating Trust** - Effective teachers are consistent and fair, creating trust with their pupils because they honour their commitments. They are genuine and generate the atmosphere where pupils can venture to be themselves, express themselves and not be afraid of making mistakes.

THINKING

The thinking that effective teachers bring to the job is characterised by **Analytical Thinking** - the drive to ask why, to see cause and effect and think ahead to implications; and **Conceptual Thinking** - the ability to see patterns in behaviour and situations. Effective teachers plan work soundly based on data and evidence led assessment of pupils and evaluation of results. They attend to what is actually happening and have a logical and systematic approach.

PLANNING & SETTING EXPECTATIONS

There are three characteristics that group together in this cluster:

1. **Drive for Improvement** - Effective teachers set and measure achievement against an internal standard of excellence. They continuously set and meet targets for themselves and their pupils. They refer regularly to visible, quantifiable and tangible measures and focus on making a difference and adding value to pupils' learning.
2. **Information Seeking** - Effective teachers ask questions to get a clear picture of pupils' understanding. They try to find out more about their pupils so that they can differentiate more effectively and set programmes of work and targets that start from an understanding of prior attainment and potential performance.
3. **Initiative** - Effective teachers use their initiative to seize immediate opportunities and sort out problems before they escalate and are able to act decisively. They are constantly 'scanning' the classroom to pick up everything that is going on. They are able to act ahead to seize a future opportunity or to anticipate and address future problems.

LEADING

There are four characteristics in this cluster:

1. **Managing Pupils** - Effective teachers get pupils on task, clearly stating learning objectives at the start of the lesson and recapping at the end and giving clear instructions about tasks. They keep pupils informed as to how the lesson fits into the programme of work and provide feedback to pupils about their progress.
2. **Passion for Learning** - Effective teachers demonstrate a passion for learning by providing a stimulating classroom environment, giving demonstrations, checking understanding and providing whole class, individual and group practice in using and applying skills and knowledge. They consistently differentiate teaching and learning to help all pupils extend their learning.
3. **Flexibility** - Effective teachers show a high degree of flexibility. They are open to new approaches and are able to adapt procedures to meet the demands of a situation. If an approach is not working with a child or a class, they approach things from another angle, accessing a wide repertoire of teaching techniques and methods to do so. They are also able to deviate from and return to a lesson plan, to take advantage of an unexpected occurrence or to pursue an area that pupils show particular interest in.

4. **Holding People Accountable** - Effective teachers are determined that pupils will achieve good results and are committed to holding people accountable, both pupils and others with whom they work. They set clear expectations of behaviour and for performance and contract with pupils on these. In this way, they provide a clear framework in which work can take place. They consistently confront poor performance, taking timely and decisive action to ensure performance recovery.

RELATING TO OTHERS

In this cluster there are three characteristics:

1. **Understanding Others** - Effective teachers have strengths in understanding others, working out the significance of the behaviour of pupils and others, even when this is not overtly expressed. They have insight into what will motivate others or what may be obstructing learning.
2. **Impact & Influence** - Effective teachers can use their ability to impact and influence pupils to perform. They have several different tools to persuade. They can calculate what will appeal to pupils so that learning can be vivid, memorable and fun and also use indirect influence, through and with others, to bring about positive educational outcomes.
3. **Teamworking** - Effective teachers provide help and support to colleagues but they also seek and value the ideas and input of others. They are active in building team spirit so that people in the school feel part of a team, identify with it and are proud of what it is doing to support pupils in achieving their full potential.

Classroom Climate

Classroom climate is the collective perception by pupils of what it feels like to be in any particular teacher's classroom, where those perceptions influence every pupil's motivation to learn and perform to the best of their ability. Effective teachers create environments which maximise opportunities to learn, in which pupils are well managed and motivated. From the pupil's perspective, they are looking to the teacher to create a sense of security and order in the classroom, an opportunity to participate actively in the class and for it to be an interesting and exciting place. There are nine aspects that contribute to the classroom climate:

1. **Clarity** around the purpose of each lesson and how it relates to the broader subject.
2. **Order** within the classroom, where discipline, order and civilised behaviour are maintained.
3. **Standards** which are clear as to how pupils should behave and what each pupil should do to achieve.
4. **Fairness** - the degree to which there is an absence of favouritism and a consistent link between rewards and performance.
5. **Participation** - the opportunity for pupils to participate actively in the class by discussion, questioning, giving out materials etc.
6. **Support** - feeling emotionally supported in the classroom, so that pupils are willing to try new things and learn from mistakes.
7. **Safety** - the degree to which the classroom is a safe place where pupils are not at risk from emotional or physical bullying.
8. **Interest** - the feeling that the classroom is an interesting and exciting place to learn.
9. **Environment** - the feeling that the classroom is a comfortable, well-organised, clean and attractive physical environment.