

Ysgol Gynradd Herbert Thompson Herbert Thompson Primary School



Learning and Teaching Policy 2019

INTRODUCTION

“Education is not the filling of a pail but the lighting of a fire.”

William Butler Yeats.

At Herbert Thompson we believe it is important to promote a caring and supportive environment, where positive relationships are developed to enable all members of the school community to feel secure and respected. We recognise their wellbeing and emotional needs must be met in order for a child to be able to learn to their true potential.

Learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone. Through a range of teaching approaches we seek to equip children with the knowledge, skills and experiences necessary to ignite a love for learning and to prepare them for their futures. We endeavour to provide an extensive range of opportunities and experiences which will help shape our learners *“to become the best that they can be”* (Unicef, Article 29).

Our school mission statement reflects these beliefs:



Our vision for the future is based around the unwavering belief that our community will live with positive values and behaviours and have the aspirations and skills to live happy and successful futures.

We have six core values that drive us and underpin all that we do:

Diversity - we respect each other's differences and celebrate our uniqueness.

Respect - we listen to each other and treat everyone the way we would like to be treated; keeping hands, feet and unkind words to ourselves.

Determination - we try our best and never give up, even when things get tough.

Care - we are helpful and considerate, showing kindness to others and looking after our surroundings.

Achievement - we challenge ourselves every day and work hard to achieve our goals.

Security - we look after each other and keep ourselves and others safe.

AIMS FOR OUR CHILDREN: FOUR CORE PURPOSES



TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY LEARNING

“It takes a whole village to raise a child.”

William Butler Yeats

Schools need to prepare children for a complex and rapidly changing world. 21st century skills comprise skills, abilities and learning dispositions that have been identified as being required for success in a 21st century society. These include creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving and communication and collaboration.

A growing body of research shows that support from those beyond the school gates is an essential part of preparing learners for the twenty-first century. Therefore, we strive to create meaningful partnerships, engage with the wider community and make links with businesses to deepen children’s learning.

As a school, we are committed to continuously improving our own skills and understand that teachers must be learners who learn alongside their pupils. Therefore, we engage in a range of professional learning opportunities, such as undertaking action research, taking part in coaching and developing networks with others.

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Teachers use a range of pedagogical approaches to meet children’s needs, including:

Overall Purpose	Focussing on the four core purposes (detailed above).
Mind-set and power of effort	High expectations and sustained pupil effort to reach challenging targets.
Blended Teaching	Using a broad range of teaching approaches as appropriate including incorporating digital learning.
Deepening Thinking: critical and creative	Promoting problem solving and creative and critical thinking.
Making powerful connections	Making connections within and across Areas of Learning Experiences (AoLEs).
Assessment for Learning	Using assessment approaches to exploit opportunities to move learning forward.
Meaningful and Authentic Contexts	Creating a range of authentic contexts for learning.
Building on prior learning and engagement	Building on prior learning and experiences to engage interest.
Cross-curricular expectations	Reinforcing cross curricular responsibilities: Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Competency.
Learning Autonomy: learning to learn	Encouraging children to take responsibility for their own learning, review their learning and reflect on how they learn.
Positive relationships	Supporting social and emotional learning and developing strong relationships with others.
Collaboration	Encouraging collaboration with others.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

All teaching staff work towards the new Professional Teaching and Leadership Standards. They are intended to:

- set clear expectations about effective practice during a practitioner’s career including, where applicable, entry to the profession
- enable practitioners to reflect on their practice, individually and collectively, against nationally agreed standards of effective practice and affirm and celebrate their successes
- support practitioners to identify areas for further professional development
- form a backdrop to the performance management process.

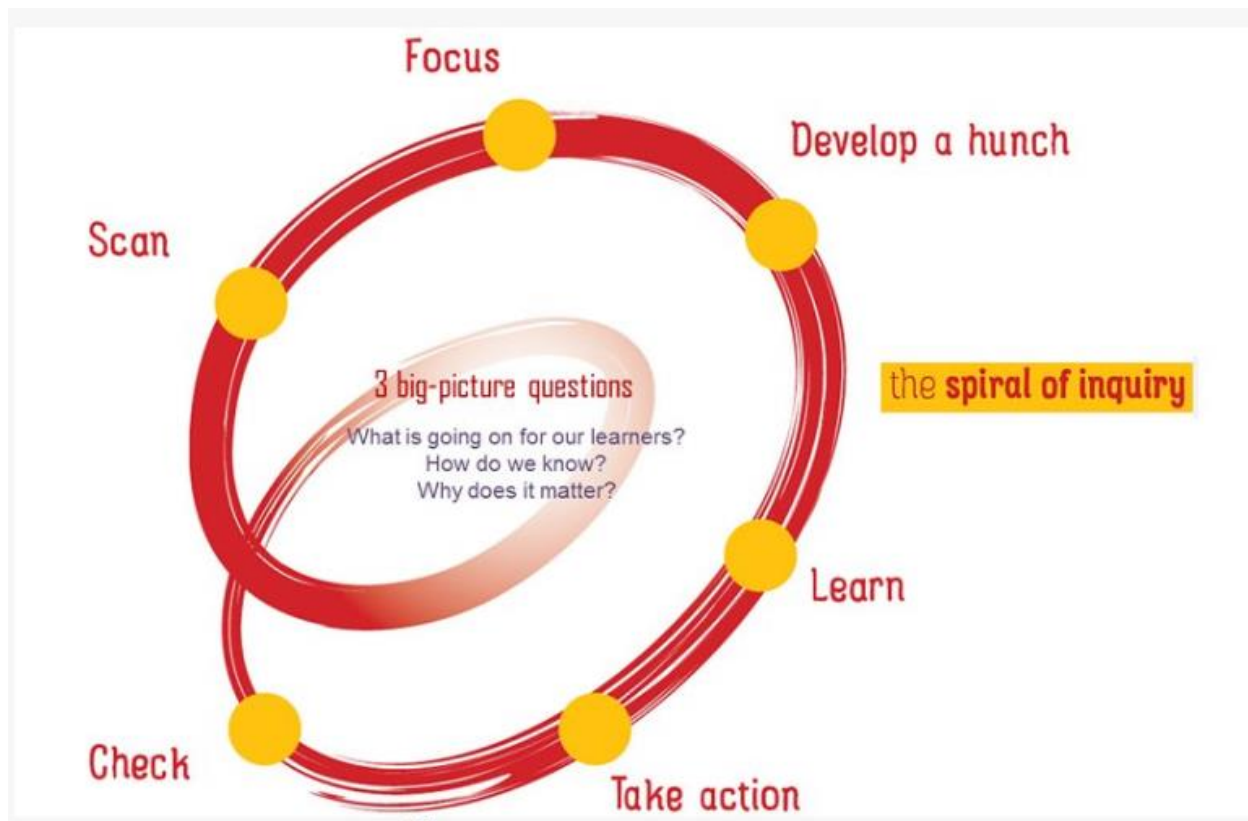
These professional standards are an important aspect of supporting all practitioners to actively engage in professional learning with the purpose of developing individual and collective expertise to make a collaborative, coherent, innovative and sustainable research-led impact on all learners.

For staff to work towards these standards, several processes are in place for them to complete them effectively.

- Performance management targets are taken from the Professional Standards.
- Staff undertake Coaching Triplets to collaboratively develop their teaching and learning.
- Staff receive Professional Learning on a weekly basis at a minimum which is evidenced in teachers Professional Folders on Google Drive.

- Staff engage in action inquiry following the Spiral of Inquiry Model.

Spiral of Inquiry Model



OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN TO LEARN IN DIFFERENT WAYS

Teachers provide a range of opportunities for children, including:

- focussed carousel learning;
- investigation and problem-solving;
- research and discovery;
- virtual collaborations, e.g. Skype;
- group work;
- paired work;
- independent work;
- whole-class work;
- asking and answering questions;
- online learning such as through Google Classroom;
- visit and visitors to enhance learners;
- 'Reflect 2 Improve – focused editing and improvement sessions;
- creative activities;
- responding to different media, such as art or music;
- debates, role-plays and oral presentations;

Ysgol Gynradd Herbert Thompson – Learning and Teaching Policy 2019

- designing and making things;
- children teaching children, e.g learning friends and play leaders.

ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES

As well as a wide range of curriculum experiences and extra-curricular activities we offer a range of enrichment opportunities across the school. Some of these experiences include:

- Sports Development Sessions - including with Cardiff City Football Club and the Welsh Rugby Union.
- Daily Mile - a daily physical activity session where children across Key Stage Two run/walk a mile a day.
- Music curriculum to inspire and develop creativity including African drumming, all sessions are linked to children's contextual learning.
- Free music lessons for children in Y5 and 6, including violin, cello, keyboards and percussion instruments. There is also the opportunity to join the school orchestra.
- Enterprising opportunities – As well as each class undertaking enterprise projects, we offer an 'Open Your Eyes Week' and Careers Fayre for children in Year 5 and 6. During these events, children meet people from a range of career paths and employment routes to inspire them to consider their future aspirations.
- 'Making Music Changing Lives' – Nursery have weekly music sessions to help develop children's confidence and self-esteem.
- Pupil Leadership Opportunities – there is a range of opportunities for pupil to be involved in the leadership of the school, particularly through involvement in Pupil Voice groups.
- Find your talents day – all staff showcase a talent and teach the children new skills to help them to realise new interests and undiscovered talents they might have.
- Welsh National Opera – focused project introducing elements of opera and performance to pupils in Year 5.

PLANNING

Short term planning sets out the appropriate objectives and skills to be taught to each lesson, these are always shared with the children and feature on SMART Notebook documents, where possible. Medium Term plans are used for each half term and set out the specific aspects of the curriculum that will be covered in a week by week format following the contextual learning theme. In addition to this, we have long term plans which are based on the whole school curriculum map and show the skills and key elements taught in each year group, over the course of the academic year.

The National Curriculum Programmes of Study, Literacy and Numeracy Frameworks, Digital Competency Framework are the key documents used for planning. The Foundation Phase Profile is also readily used in Foundation Phase. As a Pioneer school, we are also beginning to develop our awareness the Area of Learning Experiences, 'What Matter Statements' to realise the new curriculum. We base our teaching on our knowledge of the children's level of attainment and their progress and needs from previous lessons. Our main focus is to develop the knowledge, skills and experiences of all children. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to

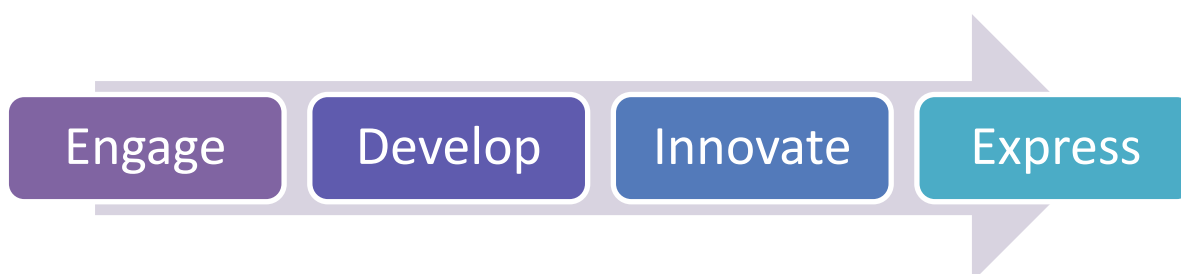
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each child's level of ability. When planning work for more able children, those with special educational needs or those for whom English is an additional language, we give due regard to their individual needs as well Individual Education Plans and/or their Individual Pupil Profiles. Staff have high expectations of all children and are skilled at monitoring their progress to ensure the learners in their care reach their full potential.

CONTEXTUAL LEARNING

We aim to provide all learners with an ambitious and engaging primary curriculum. We use a curriculum design programme called '*Cornerstones*' as a starting point to ensure that we provide a balanced curriculum. Children learn through a contextual approach and meaningful opportunities are created and exploited to enable children to develop the necessary skills, knowledge and experiences.

Cornerstones provides a four-stage pedagogy that is built on academic research and experience:



Engage – hook learners in with a memorable experience and set the scene to provide a context for learning. Explore children's interests and encourage their curiosity. This could be through a visit/trip or through exciting and engaging activities.

Develop – teach facts and information for a deeper understanding and knowledge. Introduce new skills and provide opportunities to consolidate these skills. Ensure there are a range of opportunities to apply the taught skills across the curriculum.

Innovate – provide imaginative scenarios that encourage creative thinking and enable children to apply previously learned skills. Encourage independent thinking, collaboration and problem solving. An example of an innovate project at Herbert Thompson, is the year one children creating and leading their own dinosaur museum to apply their skills, knowledge and experiences in a creative and enterprising way.

Express – provide opportunities for reflective thought and opportunities for shared evaluation. Celebrate successes and identify next steps for learning.

PUPIL VOICE

Pupil Voice is an integral part to an exciting curriculum and opportunities are sought across the

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school to incorporate pupil voice. At Foundation Phase, children have access to Amser Talent, which is continuous and enhanced provision that provides meaningful opportunities for learners to consolidate previously acquired skills. Children have weekly pupil voice sessions and share ideas that are then incorporated into these areas, leading to exciting opportunities for learning and consolidation. At Key Stage Two, learners are encouraged to share their ideas regularly at the start and throughout their learning journeys in order to provide exciting experiences and meaningful and authentic contexts for each child.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS (INCLUDING OUTDOORS)

Teachers have a duty to ensure that their classrooms are attractive, well organised learning environments. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning and an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by the children. The organisation of every classroom should allow for blended teaching including effective collaboration. There is an open door policy and staff are encouraged to visit each other's classrooms to view colleagues' practice, such as through Coaching Triplets.

A body of research* and practice shows us that children learn best when:

- the organisation of teaching groups matches the needs of individual pupils and the curriculum
- the provision is challenging and appropriately matched to each pupils' needs
- the room is arranged appropriately for the lesson
- there is easy access to relevant, well labelled resources which are tidily and safely arranged
- there are stimulating displays which value all the children's work (see Display Policy)
- there are clear expectations and consistent routines for working in different areas of the school
- classroom assistants and additional teaching support is appropriately targeted at children's needs
- the curriculum is broad, balanced and inclusive
- the curriculum is lively, stimulating and interesting with wellbeing at the centre
- outdoor learning is used to enhance learning
 - there is continuity and progression across the curriculum and between educational phases
- staff implement whole school policies on cross curricular priorities such as developing key skills, spelling etc
- blended teaching is used through a variety of appropriate approaches.

Governors - visual displays are very important and help to communicate powerful messages about what is valued in the school community. We believe that effective displays help to promote a culture of learning within and beyond the classroom and reinforces the importance that every child's work matters (see Display Policy).

**Research includes Education Endowment Foundation.*

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Governors

Ysgol Gynradd Herbert Thompson – Learning and Teaching Policy 2019

- To implement the Positive Relationships Policy through the Senior Leadership Team.
- To make, and keep up to date the school's policy with regards to Learning and Teaching.
- To make copies of this policy available for inspection by parents of pupils registered at the school and provide a copy free of charge to any parent who requests one.
- To include a summary of Learning and Teaching in the Annual Report to Parents.
- The Standards and Curriculum Committee will keep all governors apprised with progress towards the new curriculum.

Headteacher

- To implement the Learning and Teaching Policy.
- To ensure the policy is followed.
- To liaise with the Governors on teaching and learning.
- To liaise with parents.
- To ensure the policy is reviewed at least every year.
- To involve Learning Squad in reviewing the policy.
- To disseminate information to staff.
- To ensure (alongside SLT) that the school implements the requirements of the new curriculum effectively across the school.

Class Teacher

- To implement the Learning and Teaching Policy.
- To respond to the individual needs of children and ensure their voice is heard in relation to their own learning.
- To work closely with colleagues within and beyond the school to further enhance their own practice.

Learning Squad

- To monitor and review the policy every year.
- To ensure all children's voices are heard in relation to Learning and Teaching.
- To communicate their thoughts and ideas to a wider audience, e.g. through the chairperson sharing information during the Senedd meetings.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be monitored as per the Annual Self Evaluation Programme. The Learning Squad will be involved in reviewing the policy alongside key staff at the school and this will happen on an annual basis.

Date	Review Date	Pupil Leadership Group
January 2019	January 2020	<i>Learning Squad</i>

Chair of Governors:		Date:	
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Ysgol Gynradd Herbert Thompson – Learning and Teaching Policy 2019

Headteacher:		Date:	
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