



Mallusk Integrated Primary school

Teaching and Learning Policy

This policy is complimented by the Literacy & Numeracy policy, ICT policy, Integration policy, Learning through Play policy, Marking policy, Homework policy, SEN policy, RSE policy and Equality and Inclusion policy.

Ethos

At Mallusk Integrated Primary School we maintain that learning should be active, rewarding, meaningful, exciting and accessible. We believe in child-centred teaching and learning and believe in working closely with parents and pupils to ensure all our children reach their potential regardless of gender, religious, social, ethnic, linguistic and educational background. We are committed to providing a stimulating, caring and safe environment for our children. Through making thinking visible and providing exciting, supportive and challenging teaching and learning experiences, we support the children in developing metacognition and self regulation. Our activities reflect the diversity in the school community and challenge gender, race or cultural stereotypes. We maintain that these will help our children to lead happy and rewarding lives.

We encourage our children to adopt a Growth Mindset, to take a pride in their work, to recognise the importance of high standards of presentation and behaviour and to respect and accept everyone in our school community. We believe in the centrality of good relationships within the school community and believe everyone has a valuable contribution to make. We encourage good self-esteem, mutual understanding, respect and acceptance. Our broad, well balanced and flexible curriculum will ensure that children are equipped with the knowledge, skills and capabilities which will prepare them for their future lives. We believe that our school community can be a model for society, where acceptance and diversity go hand in hand, so we aim for balance and equality in our school community, in keeping with the Core Principles of Integration.

Aims

At Mallusk Integrated Primary School, we aim for our children to:

- Become confident, resourceful and independent life-long learners
- Build positive relationships with others
- Develop resilience
- Know that mistakes are opportunities for learning
- Take pride in their achievements
- Have respect for themselves
- Respect and value the ideas, opinions, beliefs and feelings of others
- Become independent, responsible citizens
- Reach their full potential

We aim to do this through:

- Meeting the needs of each individual child
- Identifying and providing high quality SEN teaching and learning opportunities
- Planning for and with the children to ensure continuity and progression
- Promoting the self-esteem and self-confidence of all children and staff
- Promoting and embedding Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities into all teaching and learning
- Promoting transfer of knowledge and skills across all areas of the curriculum
- Involving pupils fully in their own learning, planning and assessment
- Recognising and encouraging children's achievements, personal qualities, interests and talents
- Providing both support and challenge
- Communicating high expectations
- Encouraging children to take pride in their learning
- Encouraging children to 'have a go'
- Developing each child's understanding of how they think and learn
- Developing a common language and common strategies for thinking and learning
- Developing children's communication skills across all areas of the curriculum
- Fostering a respect for self and others and for agreed rules and building friendships
- Promoting and encouraging healthy choices in diet, hygiene and exercise
- Developing and encouraging positive attitudes to teaching and learning
- Involving and supporting parents and carers
- Nurturing the children's natural curiosity
- Providing top quality ICT experiences, to build confident learners, equipped to embrace the technology of the future

Effective Learning

In Mallusk Integrated Primary School we believe that children learn best when:

- They experience positive relationships with adults and peers
- They are intrinsically motivated
- Their individual learning needs are catered for
- They understand how they learn and how to optimise their learning
- The lessons are varied, well planned, stimulating, challenging and differentiated to suit the individual needs of every child
- They are aware of what is expected of them – WALT/ WILF/ sharing of Success Criteria
- Teachers communicate high expectations and pupils believe they can achieve these
- Rules, rewards and sanctions are agreed with pupils and clearly understood and carried out consistently
- They are given effective feedback to inform the next steps in learning
- Questioning is promoted to stimulate thinking at all levels
- They have strategies to help them learn, which they can use with increasing independence
- Children are encouraged to make connections with their own life experiences, through the provision of opportunity for connected learning
- They are enthusiastically involved in their own learning, planning, monitoring and evaluating their work and setting targets/goals – AFL

The Learning Environment

We believe that children learn best when they are taught in a happy, secure, stimulating and safe environment. We aim to provide this by:

- Promoting positive relationships through the school, between teachers and children, pupils and their peers and amongst staff
- Valuing and respecting everyone
- Building children's self-esteem
- The stability and security of everyday routines
- Ensuring classrooms are visually stimulating and reflect the focus on the thinking and learning
- Communicating high expectations
- Displaying and adhering to the Golden rules
- Celebrating children's learning through displays, prizes, cups & praise
- Providing a varied range of suitable resources and encouraging children to independently access these
- Grouping children according to what best supports their learning at that time
- Identifying and addressing barriers to learning (e.g. ESL/ attendance/ home environment and support/ medical or health issues)

We consistently use a variety of teaching approaches and learning experiences relevant to the children's needs in order to enable, empower, support and challenge each child. These include:

- Opportunities for children to work as a whole class, or in a variety of groups, pairs and independently
- Using ICT effectively to enhance learning
- Using a wide range of strategies which stimulate thinking and learning, including the use of Thinking Frames and Habits of Minds
- Fully involving pupils in the planning process based on previous knowledge and connected learning
- Planned and purposeful play and activity based learning indoors and outdoors
- LSC and other agencies involved in supporting individual needs
- Using effective questioning
- The pace and pitch of the lesson suited to the learner
- Providing practical, creative and problem solving experiences based on real life
- Teachers modelling their own thinking and learning, guiding and scaffolding children's learning to support increasing independence
- Promoting and develop metacognitive talk in the classroom and a common language for thinking and learning
- Relevant educational trips and visits
- The use of visitors and speakers
- Use of task boards and extension activities
- Effective plenary sessions to review learning
- AFL, marking & verbal feedback (see Marking Policy), peer and self-assessment and setting goals
- Celebration of success through displaying work, praise & sharing in assembly
- Staff CPD to ensure up to date and continuous improvement in standards of teaching and learning
- Involving and informing parents and carers

Additional Adults

In Mallusk Integrated Primary School all staff are valued and involved in the learning experiences of the children. Classroom assistants play an important role in supporting and developing children's thinking and learning, contributing to the thinking culture in the school. Classroom assistants enhance learning by:

- Being involved in the planning process with the teacher
- Being clear about who they are supporting and why
- Working with teachers to support learning by modelling their own thinking and learning, guiding and scaffolding children's learning to support increasing independence
- Fully engaging with pupils during lesson times
- Discussing outcomes and future teaching and learning experiences with the teacher
- Developing positive relationships with children, parents and carers

All school staff have a responsibility to model the school ethos and values, thereby teaching children respect, kindness and acceptance.

Planning for Learning

Teachers use planning as a means to ensure continuity and progression, to address the needs of all learners and to ensure every child has full access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

At Mallusk Integrated Primary School we plan using:

1. The Northern Ireland Curriculum including the Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities Framework
2. Children's ideas and questions
3. Schemes of work
4. Half termly planning
5. Daily notes

Planning for effective Teaching and Learning involves:

- Starting from children's own experiences and previous knowledge
- Having clear learning intentions and success criteria, allowing for progression of skills, knowledge and understanding and communicating these to the children
- Involving the children in setting clear goals and ways of achieving these
- Awareness of individual learning needs
- Varying the range of teaching styles and approaches used, including Thinking Frames and Habits of Mind
- Providing opportunities for connected learning and transfer of skills
- Including all abilities
- Referring to IEPs/groups
- Embedding Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities
- Effective, reflective and honest evaluations of teaching and learning, to inform future planning
- Detailing, where appropriate, class and school targets related to the SDP
- Observation and assessment details where relevant

We ensure continuity and progression take place through:

- School Development Planning
- Schemes of work
- Agreed assessment and recording approaches
- Staff sharing ideas/resources
- Regular monitoring of planning
- Internal standardisation of work in each year group

Strategies for teaching pupils with Special Educational Needs

In Mallusk Integrated Primary School, we strongly believe that every child has the right to access a full, broad and balanced curriculum and to be taught in a supportive manner, according to his or her needs. In keeping with the Code of Practice for SEN, the class teacher, SENCO and any relevant outside agencies, work together to develop a planned programme suited to the needs of the individual child (see Special Educational Needs Policy).

We use the following strategies to support children with Special Educational Needs –

- Identifying children with SEN at an early stage in order to implement early intervention strategies
- Differentiation within planning and class teaching & management, suited to the individual's needs
- Developing of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) in conjunction with parents, the child and all adults involved
- Effective use of classroom assistants to support learning
- Regular evaluation of targets and communication with parents and relevant personnel with regard to progress and future planning
- Praise, encouragement and celebration of success and effort

We believe that Gifted and Talented children are those who have the potential to develop significantly beyond what is expected for their age. This may be academic, creative, sporting or expressive. We employ the following strategies when teaching gifted and talented pupils:

- Work is differentiated to provide challenges and includes problem solving and investigations
- Teachers communicate higher expectations to gifted and talented children
- Children's successes and achievements are celebrated and shared
- Children are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities
- Children are given increased responsibility and independence
- Opportunities are provided for children to share and make the most of their talents in the school and community
- Developing of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) in conjunction with parents, the child and all adults involved

Assessment

In Mallusk Integrated Primary School, we believe that the purpose of assessment is to provide information to teachers and pupils in order to improve teaching and learning and ultimately to raise standards and empower lifelong learners.

Teachers use their own observations and assessments throughout the year.

We also use the following standardised tests:

- Cat4 (P3-7)
- Progress in Maths (PIM) P4- P7
- Progress in English (PIE) P4-P7
- Group Reading Test 2 P3- P7

The test results are analysed by the teachers, Literacy & Numeracy Co-ordinators and Assessment Co-ordinator (Principal), who use the data to inform the School Development Plan, according to areas needing improvement. Results are discussed with the Board of Governors.

End of Key Stage data is used for measuring performance and benchmarking with similar schools. Teachers use the data to set class and individual targets and devise strategies to reach these targets. Teachers and co-ordinators collect evidence of improvement.

In supporting pupils in developing metacognition and self-regulation, it is anticipated that they become increasingly self-aware, self-reflective and self-monitoring. This is facilitated by developing the Habits of Mind and providing opportunities for metacognitive activity.

Assessment For Learning is also carried out by teachers and pupils during self and peer assessment in order to:

- Involve children in their own learning through shared Learning Intentions, skills and knowledge needed and agreed success criteria
- Empower children to take responsibility for their learning and become lifelong learners
- Provide relevant feedback which can be used by pupils to improve their learning, self-esteem, confidence and performance

Outcomes of assessment are used to inform future planning for teaching and learning.

Monitoring and Evaluating

In Mallusk Integrated Primary School, we recognise the need for regular monitoring and evaluating of the teaching and learning, in order to bring about improvement and to raise standards. Staff reflect on and evaluate their own teaching and learning and use the outcomes to inform future planning.

The Principal and Co-ordinators regularly monitor, in order to measure the impact of targets set in action plans. They do this through:

- Regular discussions
- Listening to the viewpoints of the children
- Self-Evaluation to inform SDP
- Trusted Colleague Networking /Sharing good practice
- PRSD
- Evaluating Action plans of the SDP and regularly reviewing impact of measures taken
- Reviewing IEP targets
- Standardised tests
- Target setting and review
- End of key stage data
- Benchmarking data
- Monitoring planning and teacher evaluations
- Reviewing schemes regularly
- Internal standardisation of pieces of work
- Monitoring displays reflecting children's learning
- Staff meetings
- Reports to Governors by Principal & Co-ordinators

Home/School Links

At Mallusk Integrated Primary School, parents are welcomed, kept informed of their children's progress, and provided with information and help to support their learning. This is carried out through:

- School Website
- School Facebook page
- Parent- Teacher meetings in November and February
- Learning Notes shared each week with parents via the school Learning Site:
<https://sites.google.com/c2ken.net/mipshomelearning>
- Annual written reports
- Informal and on-going meetings, emails, Class Dojo (P4-7)
- Home/ School Link Books
- IEP review meetings
- Comments used in marking
- Homework which is differentiated and relating to class teaching and learning
- Open day for prospective P1 parents and children
- Displays of children's work
- Parent workshops
- Induction programme for P1 children and parents

We believe that parents can support their children and the school by:

- Ensuring that their child has the best attendance record possible
- Ensuring that their child is on time for the start of the school day
- Ensuring that their child is provided with the correct uniform and PE kit
- Informing us if there are matters outside school life which are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school
- Promoting a positive attitude towards school and learning and healthy lifestyle choices
- Ensuring that their child has adequate sleep
- Attendance at parent presentations/ workshops provided by school

Role of Governors

Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school policies on teaching and learning. In particular, they:

- Support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively
- Ensure that the school building and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning
- Monitor resources in the light of health and safety regulations
- Monitor teaching in terms of raising pupil attainment
- Through PRSD, ensure that staff development promotes good quality teaching
- Monitor self-review, including regular reports from the Principal and the Annual Report to Parents
- Provide support and challenge to the Principal

Staff Professional Development

Staff Development is closely linked with the SDP. The SDP outlines the professional development needs of staff in order to achieve targets set out in the action plans, and is regularly reviewed. INSET and training days are arranged, where appropriate. Targets for PRSD are agreed and are monitored by members of the SMT. Staff are encouraged and supported to pursue their own professional development and to share best practice.

Community Partnerships

In Mallusk Integrated Primary School, we believe that our school is at the heart of the community and learning is enhanced through a wide range of experiences and opportunities.

We have developed links with the wider community, which include:

- Involvement in local ceremonies and events
- Links with local churches
- Links with Mallusk Community Playgroup, local nurseries and post primary schools
- Visitors and speakers
- Sports training from local facilitators (e.g. GAA/soccer coaches)
- Links with the local council – recycling, workshops

Teaching & Learning in the event of long term closure

Remote Learning describes any learning where the teacher and the learner are not physically together. The pandemic created the need for a period of emergency remote learning and teaching, where both teachers and learners had to adjust very quickly to a new way of communicating with each other. *As in normal circumstances, if pupils are absent because they are ill, they should take time to rest and recover and should not be working from home.*

If an individual child or a small number of pupils within a class bubble have to self-isolate for a designated period due to COVID-19, parents should talk directly to school about provision of education materials as, in these circumstances, teachers will be continuing to teach all classes during the school day so expectations must be realistic.

Experience from around the world indicates that we should not expect to make similar progress to taught lessons in any given period of remote learning. The school will identify key learning priorities, without necessarily sacrificing breadth across the curriculum. Remote learning for younger pupils and those who may have additional learning needs will typically need more involvement from parents, whilst some older pupils may be able to learn more independently.

Teachers will try to limit the number of worksheets provided, however, if teachers are posting worksheet style resources on the school learning site, hard copies will be available at school or can be delivered or posted, as not all parents will have access to printing facilities and ink cartridges are expensive.

Most of the time, teachers will provide learning notes and guidance for parents/ carers and some pre-recorded teaching videos so that the children and parents/ carers may access these at a time which suits them best. We also recognise the importance of peer interaction during remote learning. From time to time, teachers may choose to implement some live lessons via a C2K supported digital platform, such as Collaborate, ensuring that all child protection and safeguarding procedures are appropriately followed. This will provide pupils with the opportunity to collaborate in discussions and group assignments and share their learning with their peers in small groups and online forums. Creating small groups or pairs who share thoughts, carry out peer marking and give feedback on each other's work can be very

beneficial. This will help maintain a social connection, help pupils avoid feelings of isolation and encourage pupils to continue working with others as they learn.

During a period of remote learning, parents & carers will regularly send photos of the children's work and feedback via email or Class Dojo. They can contact the class teachers via their c2k email address and can request phone calls to discuss their child's learning. Teachers will provide opportunities to give regular whole class and individual feedback to pupils whilst they are learning remotely. This can be done by videos, phone calls, emails etc.

We recognise that motivating some children to complete tasks may be difficult during remote learning. We aim to engage the children by providing clear direction and purpose, sharing learning intentions and success criteria, and praising and showcasing good work. This can be done via the school learning site and Class Dojo.

Issues to consider

- The well-being of the children, their parents/carers/guardians and the school staff
- The wide range of issues that the families are facing
- The resources, time and hardware available to the teachers
- What is realistically achievable in the current climate with the aim of establishing a sensitive balance between home and work life of parents/carers/guardians and teaching staff
- The sensitive consideration of the parents'/carers'/guardians' capacity to support learning at home and communicate clearly what support is available from the school when this is required
- The amount of work set for pupils – too much can be as much of a problem as too little
- Issues with digital connectivity
- Approaches that ensure regular staff contact with pupils to support them with their learning
- The recognition that it is not possible to replicate school experiences in a home environment and instead, encourage parents to engage confidently, innovatively and creatively when supporting the learning of their children

Digital learning at home

We recognise that in some homes, there may be no devices or only one device but more than one child who requires access to that device for learning, or where parents/carers require the device for work purposes. Considering this, we will focus primarily on an asynchronous delivery model of learning, where teaching materials, which may include video/audio clips, are posted online, and learners work through these materials in their own time, communicating with the teacher via email. This approach allows families to engage when it is most appropriate for them and their family/home circumstances. **However, there will be an expectation that work should be completed.**

In the event of long term closure, the school will prioritise provision of devices to children in receipt of Free School Meals or who are on the SEN register, and who have no access, or

limited access to devices at home. The EA has also made provision to provide devices to such pupils.

Roles of parents and carers

Parents and carers play a key role in their child's education and never more so when a significant proportion of the learning is taking place at home. In the last few months, parents have had an even closer view of their child's learning. As a school, we have learned a lot also and we now want to consider how to ensure that this partnership is supported and developed further by providing relevant and timely information to the parent or carer, giving and taking feedback more regularly on progress, building a culture of learning with parents as key partners.

Parents & carers are encouraged to establish a routine with their children to include:

- Times for waking, working and eating whilst ensuring regular intervals for physical activity and relaxation
- The creation of a schedule to co-ordinate the learning plan provided by the school
- Ensuring their child takes a leading role when making choices about how to engage in the learning provided
- A balance between offline and online learning activities
- Talking about and being interested in what their child is learning rather than on the activity
- The importance of staying safe online and engaging respectfully and appropriately with others in an online learning environment, in accordance with the school's Acceptable Use policy

Monitoring & assessment

During a period of remote learning assessing the children's progress and engagement will be more challenging. The main focus of assessment activity will be on levels of engagement and well-being and formative assessment for learning.

We aim to involve parents & carers in the assessment process. This can be as simple as taking photos or videos of their child's work which they can share with their teacher via email. Teachers will provide regular feedback to the pupils through, email, voice recording comments or via a video. Teachers may create a simple survey or questionnaire, encouraging children to reflect on their own learning after a task, or use strategies such as self-marking quizzes.

Online safety

The Department of Education's Safer Schools App has useful information on how to help educate, empower and protect children and young people when online. The school's ICT and Acceptable use policy will also provide guidance on this.

Policy implementation date: February 2022