Learning Policy

This policy was approved and adopted by
the Local Academy Board
on 12th January 2023

It will be reviewed in Autumn 2024

1. RATIONALE
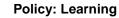
Our Vision and Values
To release and develop the full intellectual, emotional and spiritual potential of every individual child at the start of a journey that they will continue for the rest of their lives, seeing that each child achieves the maximum that they are capable of as a unique person… ordinary people achieving extraordinary things together.

1. **Excellence.** We seek to be the best we can be at all we do and are, in every area and at every level of activity.
2. **Academic Achievement.** Every child at the school will be enabled to attain their full potential for their age and level of development. Standards and attainment in all subjects will be the highest possible. This will be achieved through careful planning, excellent teaching and provision for learning, wise and challenging target setting and close monitoring of the performance of every individual member of the school.
3. **Learning.** Everything we do as a school will be approached in the spirit of learning, which recognises that we are on a journey of discovery – about life, each other and the world in which we live. Because it is a journey, we can never claim to have arrived; every member of the school community is here to learn, and every member is always learning - and learning to learn.
4. **The individual.** Each child at the school is unique and important; they is why we exist. Their worth, value and importance will not be measured purely in terms of results achieved but also as a person who has talents, abilities, opinions, feelings and a heart, who can make a vital contribution. We are committed to helping each child develop as fully as possible and gaining the best start to a lifetime of education.
5. **The community.** Each person in the school, young or old, is a key part of a wider community. It is highly and equally important that each person is both an individual but also participates and contributes fully as a member of the school community. Our heart and ethos will be reflected in the functioning of the whole school community, and no individual member will assume a greater importance than the whole. 'Others first' is an important part of who we are and how we think.
6. **'Whole Life'.** We believe that education is about far more than pure results or quantitatively measured performance. We believe passionately in the importance of spiritual, social, moral and emotional development, which requires a wider curriculum to excite and develop every child at every level. We want to help every member of the school community acquire an understanding and appreciation of their natural, social and spiritual environment, to value each other, and to explore an exciting 'four dimensional' world.
7. **Adventure.** Every member of the school community, adult or child, will be encouraged to 'reach for the sky'. No limit will be placed on ambition or vision. Every encouragement will be given to aim as high as possible and to strive for goals which may initially appear far out of reach. We want to be adventurers who will aim for the mountain summit and risk failure rather than conservatives who only plan for the foothills they know they can

reach. This readiness to take risks will be underpinned by responsible and sensible thought, rather than reckless enthusiasm that is heedless of consequences.

8. **Joy.** We want the school to be a place where life is celebrated in an atmosphere of joy and generosity, where we all enjoy the excitement and fun of learning and exploring together.

9. **Integrity.** The pursuit of truth and natural justice is essential to the successful working of an effective community. We are committed to openness, honesty and a determination to work at all times in ways that are consistent with our core beliefs, to ensure that what we decide to do, the policies we adopt on matters either small or great will be answerable to these core principles – there must always be a clear reason based on a core principle for what we do.

10. **Responsibility.** Every individual who is part of the school in any capacity will be encouraged to take full responsibility for their actions, choices and contribution. We will emphasise the importance of making choices and understanding the consequences of our actions: that what we do affects others and ourselves, and that we are responsible – under guidance and within the limitations of our circumstances – for our own development. This applies to children and adults alike – everyone who is part of the school community. The success of the community depends on every person being prepared to take responsibility and appreciating the impact of their actions and choices on the whole.

Learning is at the heart of our school vision and we constantly seek to offer the best opportunities for whole life learning for all those who are part of our community.

This policy clarifies the shared understanding that we have about learning, gives information on the principles of learning that we have agreed and how we take these principles into practice in the school.

2. PRINCIPLES
2.1 A definition of learning
Learning is a complex process about which there are many theories. However, we understand learning to be:

"An active process of meaning-making in which the learner assimilates, constructs and integrates new knowledge and understanding in a way that makes sense to him or her and can be used in other contexts."

(von Glaserfeld,1987)

We know the importance of meta-learning – learning about learning and reflecting and 'making sense of experience' (Watkins 2001), is the hallmark of what it means to be an effective learner.

We believe that learning and performance are not synonymous and the relationship between them is complex. We appreciate that an over concern with performance orientation can be detrimental and aim to create a context for a learning orientation where the emphasis is on

improving one's competence, not proving one's competence. This is based on our belief that everyone has the ability to improve and learn and that effort leads to success.

We recognise that emotions can influence learning and therefore seek to develop emotional awareness and intelligence in our children so that they are led to master their emotions.

The children have their own definitions of learning:

"Learning is about doing things and getting to know how to do them" *Imogen*

"When you learn to do things that you couldn't do before" *Amelia*

"We learn by helping each other find out new things" *Jayden*
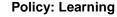
"Learning is interesting" *Oscar*

"If it goes wrong, we try again" *Emerald Class*

"To do it, not to hear it, to actually do it" *Megan*

2.2 Key elements of learning

The key elements in learning that we have identified are as follows:
- Involvement
- Reflection/ evaluation
- Application
- Collaboration/ generation of ideas/ knowledge with others
- Processing information
- Reasoning
- Making sense
- Communication
- Moving forward/ a change in thinking
- Making links and connections
- Making choices
- Learning for self/ ownership
- Responsibility for own learning
- Active participation
- Enquiring/ curiosity
- Creativity
- Desire to learn
- Being part of a learning culture
- Purpose
- Challenge
- Planning

- Managing self
- Understanding others
- Cycle: do – review – learn – apply - master

2.3 Characteristics of an effective learner at Crawley Ridge

We aim to afford all members of our school the opportunity to develop characteristics of effective learners as shown below.
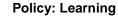They can:
- Think for themselves
- Take responsibility
- Think ahead
- Show initiative (think creatively – 'play' with thoughts and ideas and make their own)
- Apply/ use knowledge or skills confidently
- Respond to feedback
- Engage with learning
- Think through ideas logically/ use reasoning
- Process information
- Make connections
- Sustain concentrations/ focus
- Make choices
- Ask questions – is inquisitive/ curious
- Make good use of time
- Show empathy

They are:
- 'Hungry' for learning – show "drive" and commitment
- Active listeners
- Motivated
- Enthusiastic
- Confident
- Adaptable/ flexible/ open-minded
- Reflective – able to look at self / refine ideas / apply new ways
- Risk takers – see 'miss-takes' as part of learning – not afraid to 'have a go'
- Persistent especially when facing challenge
- Well balanced - self aware and can manage feelings
- Interactive – good communicators – can explain to others
- Collaborative
- Conscientious

They have:
- A desire to be challenged
- High aspirations
- An inner security – happiness
- Sense of purpose

- Good social skills

3. PROCEDURES / GUIDANCE FOR USE

3.1 How this will translate into practice.
We have a shared understanding of the ways that will enable effective learning to be taken into practice. The areas below indicate how effective learning will be seen in action in the school.

Questioning / Enquiry
- Adults and children using questions to enhance learning – selecting from a menu fit for purpose – See Bloom's taxonomy
- Higher order questions – application (another context), analytical (focus in), synthesis (re-apply) and evaluation (make judgements)
- A high number of open questions to promote learning
- Inviting pupils to elaborate in their answers – what exactly do you mean? Delving. Modelling structures - I think your answer to this might be…….
- Children framing their own questions
- Predicting outcomes
- Testing conclusions to improve ideas
- Children defining problems
- Staff modelling questions
- Waiting time once question asked – a pause or partner work before feedback. For example: Wait 5 secs. No hands up
- Questions asking for extended answers
- Questions that ask for speculation
- Questions that structure – classify, analyse, predict, create
- 'What if' questions that encourage links between areas
- An emphasis on effective dialogue to promote learning

Challenging / Risk-taking / Problem solving
"In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity." - *A. Einstein*

- Children seeing '*miss*–takes' as a positive way of taking learning forward
- Staff knowing when to step in and when to hold back to allow child to 'work through' risk – not removing the learning opportunity by over protection.
- Setting up a situation where there is a contradiction, so it encourages discussion.
- A focus on learning and not always the end product
- Challenge – adults offering challenging situations
- Investigations across subject areas
- PE and outdoor activities, including Forest School – the physical and collaborative aspects of challenge and problem-solving

- Displays that focus on the learning journey to encourage risk taking – labels to show how the learning has developed and how 'miss–takes' are positive
- Children wanting to 'have a go' – feeling confident about trying new experiences
- Modelling with staff, visitors, other young people
- Children being given and taking on new and demanding responsibilities
- Problem solving model: children interact with material and generate questions - teacher focuses children's questions to introduce concept - children work on new problem to apply concept
- Identifying problem and planning ways to overcome
- Monitoring own progress in tackling problem
- Specific and direct praise and encouragement

Making choices / Responsibility for learning / Learning for self / Active learning/ Independence

"The more we do for them – the less they will choose to do for themselves, creating a vicious cycle of learned helplessness. Don't ride the bike for them!"

- Accessible, wide ranging resources so children can be independent – a 'workshop' classroom
- Well organised and labelled
- Having working walls to aid learning
- Opportunities for children to select
- Children selecting and returning resources
- Choice of follow up – for example RE follow up – through art, drama, writing
- Teachers shifting responsibility – "don't give me the problem – bring me the solution" eg dealing with inappropriate behaviour at playtime Not always providing the answers but seeking to help children come up with their own, so increasing their independence
- Times when children make choices for places to work – where to sit, with whom
- Children having opportunity to 'drive' learning forward
- Child initiated tasks with teacher intervention
- Pupils looking for evidence rather than receiving knowledge passively
- Linking concepts to real life situations, events, objects
- Peer / self-assessment
- Reflecting on learning – talking / writing about own strengths and areas for development
- Mapping to show where learner / class is at the beginning and end of learning experience.
- Mapping as way of planning own learning

Collaborate / Generate ideas together / Build knowledge with others / Foster social skills / Communicate

- Paired work – discussions / use of whiteboards
- Children presenting own ideas
- Hearing and reflecting on ideas of others
- Problem solving in pairs / groups

- Class to class – year group to year group work
- Groups feeding back after collaborative work
- IT as a collaborative process
- Speak effectively to different audiences
- Opportunities to listen and respond appropriately
- Developing as fluent speaker, reader and writer

Confidence / Enthusiasm / Desire to learn/ A passion for learning / Motivation
- Learning 'beyond' the school – bringing things into school
- Engrossed / on-task
- Children experiencing 'edge' and working through this
- Taking an idea and exploring creatively to serve a 'learning' outcome – children taking ideas and controlling direction of learning/ initiating learning
- Children making choices
- Developing persistence
- Focus and concentration
- Deriving pleasure from learning

Information processing
- Opportunities to locate/collect relevant information
- Sort, classify, sequence, compare, contrast
- Analyse part / whole relationships

Reasoning
- Opportunities to give reasons for opinions and actions
- Draw inferences and make deductions
- Use precise language to explain what they think – across subject
- Make judgements and decisions informed by reasons or evidence

Purpose/ Planning / Goals
- Clear learning intentions
- Clear **simple** planning giving learning intentions - long, medium and short term
- Clear relevant progression of essential learning
- Clear success criteria known by staff and communicated to children – "We'll know we've achieved this because…"
- Links to the big picture
- Teacher-initiated but also opportunities for child–initiated
- Cycle: do – review – learn – apply - master

Moving forward
- Books reflect stages of learning in progress
- Writing walls show progression – whole school writing
- Green files - evidence across school of standards
- Learning displays

- How we give feedback – marking on process / learning
- Mapping/ tracking progress – knowing where the children are in their understanding
- Application of learning observed in new situation
- Monitoring – is he/ are they / am I moving forward?
- Assessment for learning – green and gold
- Self-assessment and pupil response feedback

Creativity
- Generate and extend ideas
- Grasp opportunities for showing initiative and making choices
- Use imagination
- Look for alternatives

Application / Making links
- Investigations
- Problem solving activities
- Problem solving approach
- Type of questioning to encourage application
- Cross curricular work
- Mapping

Reflection / Evaluation
- Time made available for this
- A skill that is taught so that it becomes natural
- Teacher modelling
- Use of circle time to offer reflection time
- Time to reflect on marking
- Pupil self-evaluation

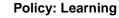## Basic requirements at effective level for learning
- Good use of space – well organised room
- Good ventilation
- Access to water bottles
- High standards of behaviour and effective systems to enable positive learning environment

Self-awareness
- Knowing how to learn
- Realising how they relate to others – thinking and feeling
- Using these elements to organise themselves and plan learning

Managing feelings
- Strategies to recognise and accept own feelings

- Use these to regulate their learning and behaviour eg manage anxiety or anger, demonstrate resilience in the face of difficulty

Empathy
- Understand others - predict/anticipate their thoughts, feelings, perceptions
- Seeing another point of view and modifying response

Being part of a learning culture
- Seeing developments in school and the challenges
- School Council – identifying areas for development and making them happen - dealing with challenges that arise
- Seeing a '*miss*-take' and then forward movement in the big picture
- Immersed in a culture where opportunities are taken
- Seeing adults and others learning

In order to encompass all of these elements the recommended cycle of a lesson is retrieval – to retrieve previous learning; starter – to introduce new learning; input; to deliver new learning; activity – to embed learning and plenary – to check learning has taken place.

3.2 A Learning School
Learning is not viewed as being limited to curriculum time. We seek to provide learning opportunities in every aspect of school life in every part of the school day.
In addition, as a result of our self-evaluation and review processes, we seek to learn as a school and strive to continually provide the best possible learning environment for all.

3.3 Learning as a Community
It is our firm belief that all adults in the community are learners. All adults in the school, teachers and support staff, are seen to be responsible for seeking opportunities to further their own learning. Further information can be found in our Continuing Professional Development Policy.

In addition, we seek to take learning beyond the school day and walls. We encourage parents to be active partners in their child's learning and offer workshops and opportunities for parents to be part of the life of the school. We raise awareness of events in the local community.
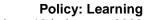
4. MONITORING EVALUATION AND REVIEW
This policy will be reviewed on a two-year cycle by the Headteacher, the staff and the Local Academy Board.

5. LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES
All policies listed below are based on the Learning Policy
- The Curriculum Policy
- All individual subject policies

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
- Continuing Professional Development Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Early Years Foundation Stage Policy
- Effective Feedback Policy
- Teaching and Learning Strategy