



Ravensfield Primary School
Teaching and Learning Policy

2019

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Classroom Environment

Fitting the classroom to the pupil; Enabling Classrooms (produced by Tameside LA)

At Ravensfield we use the Thrive approach for the holistic development of the children in our care. The way a child behaves in the classroom relates to the way in which the teacher meets the pupils' needs. We use PLACE. We are Playful, Loving, Accepting, Curious and Empathic. If the child smiles, laughs, cares for others and loves learning, it is due to the way in which the teacher successfully makes the brain function and develop pupils' love for learning.

It is also the case that where children misbehave, forget things or fail as learners it is potentially due to the way in which teachers and/or the environment have closed down the pupils' brains and desire to learn. (Behaviour Policy)

At Ravensfield, we strive to provide the right type of environment where pupils' minds have been opened and optimal learning takes place. As a consequence, children will flourish. High expectations and unlimited optimism in what children can achieve is consistent throughout the school – creating a positive, enthused and engaging classroom/school- based culture.

Key features within our classrooms are

• Positive exchanges predominate
• There is no tension between pupils and teachers
• Learning takes place within a social context-it is a reciprocal process based on social skills
• Speech and dialogue are key processes within learning
• Teacher talk is precise, focussed and to the point
• Mistakes are an integral part of the learning process
• Effort should be rewarded within learning
• Effective learners take responsibility for their own learning

What we do not do...

• Think it is always the teacher's job to impart learning
• Dominate lessons by talking at children for extended periods of time (on average teacher talk will last the child's age + 1 minutes)
• Believe that some children are not capable or good at learning
• Put a limit a child's potential with pre-conceived low expectation
• Allow our children's behaviour to trigger our own disregulation
• Shout at our children (although we may use a stern tone of voice)
• Focus on getting it right first time – it promotes fixed mindset and limits learning

Classroom Practice and the Reptilian brain

In line with the principles of the Thrive approach, we know that effective learning take place when physical and emotional needs are met. Children need to have their needs met, feel safe and special.

Stressful conditions activate the reptilian brain and close down the brain's higher order functions. Children go into 'fight, flight or freeze.' In a classroom context this would include time when there is a lack of self-esteem, a feeling of insecurity or isolation, fear of failure or disparagement, personal worries or a sense of injustice. We use VRFs to attune, validate, contain and soothe a child in order for them to become ready to learn.

To ensure we set the right culture for our pupils we must ensure that:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils have their own area of learning space
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The right conditions for learning established with regards to physical comfort
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children feel valued and welcomed – safe environment is established quickly and maintained
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are clear systems and routines – children understand what, when, why, who and how
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers are absolutely certain about what they expect from children through setting the right achievable goals and targets (Our Rules and expectations)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities exist to bring a sense of identity and belonging, creating a clear understanding of the pupils' roles within our team (attendance, punctuality, modelling good behaviour, classroom, school loyalty)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children feel physically and emotionally safe as a result of the effective use of praise. In our most positive learning environments the positive exchanges outnumber the negative (5 – 1 ratio...at least)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities exist to develop both the social and emotional intelligence of pupils. Pupils are allowed opportunities to talk about their feelings and be taught how to manage them. Children are taught how to build relationships and deal with conflict. Classrooms are free of sarcasm and insults and are places that are fair and consistent (after school provision and residential)

Classroom Practice and The Limbic system

The limbic system is in the mid brain and governs learning, memory and emotions. At Ravensfield we recognise the importance of this part of the brain. It is responsible for character building. It creates a sense of values and establishes our beliefs. It attaches truth to what we learn and helps us to develop a sense of self. Our longer term memory is situated within the limbic system. Research shows that emotions are fundamentally important in learning and the more powerfully emotions are connected to the information we need to learn, the quicker it will become embedded in our memory and the easier it becomes to recall facts and figures. High levels of teacher talk will not enable the limbic system to develop deeper learning and that is why at Ravensfield we ensure our teacher dialogue is used efficiently and effectively.

At Ravensfield we...

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excite
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enthuse
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When introducing new learning teachers will involve pupils in activating prior knowledge through activities such as prediction exercises and the making and sharing of mind maps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scaffold learning through high quality dialogue, role play, discussion groups, activities, interactive scaffold tasks. Working and speaking with other pupils develops a shared consciousness through group interactions and a borrowed consciousness from other more expert pupils
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make regular intended reference to the learning objective and success criteria throughout the lesson
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use stimuli such as humour, music, colour or an element of surprise to engage learners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop ways of summarising work that involve visualisation and pupil dialogue in which children review their own learning

Classroom Practice and Brain Lateralisation

Although it is not strictly neurologically accurate, it can be a useful metaphor to consider that the brain is divided into two hemispheres joined by a bridge of fibres (known as the Corpus Colosum) which allow both sides of the brain to work together.

Each hemisphere serves a variety of different functions and processes information in different ways. For most people, the left hemisphere deals with linguistic issues. It is analytical and is therefore used extensively in problem solving activities or when sequential processing is required. If the left brain is analytical, logical, precise and time sensitive then the right brain sees the bigger picture, processing things in a holistic way: it thrives on rhythm, music and learns well from images and pictures. It is also

more emotional. The left brain will more readily process the learning objective; the right brain will more readily engage with the context in which the learning happens. We promote the connections by:

- Explicitly linking learning within and across curriculum areas
- Encouraging pupils to make within and across curriculum links for themselves
- Using a raft of approaches to stimulate thinking for example looking at the bigger picture as well as step by step
- Across time ensuring that teaching sequences will include a variety of resources/activities to stop teaching sequences from becoming over repetitive/boring-using music, images, the arts etc to create, summarise and make learning memorable and meaningful

To effectively teach and motivate children at Ravensfield, we will follow 4 key principles.

1. Learning is best when there is an emotional involvement that involves the heart as well as the head. Firstly this can come from the context and content of the lesson, providing children with reasons why they are learning.
2. Learning should always be an interactive process. To build cognitive structures and concepts, we need to use new experience from earlier learning.
3. Explicit reflection on learning through meta-cognitive processes. Children should be encouraged to reflect on what they already know, and what they need to learn next. They should also develop their own strategies for accessing this learning. Children need to have a variety of problem solving techniques that they can apply in a range of contexts.
4. Learning should always be seeking to promote independent pupils who achieve well as a result of carefully structured learning experiences. (Centred around a clear learning objective supported by appropriate, simple and succinct success criteria)

Teachers' checklist to ensure key learning takes place (These will be used during learning walks)

At Ravensfield, there will be consistency across the year groups in the following areas:

- Expectations-based on prior attainment (for higher attainers, ARE, lower prior attainers and SEN pupils)
- Pedagogical Content Knowledge
- Decontextualised Learning objectives
- Success criteria
- WAGOLL
- Modelling
- Vocabulary

A typical lesson structure could be...

1. Introduce the L.O. – assess what the children understand by the LO shared
2. Clarify context
3. Ascertain prior knowledge – independent task
4. Refer back to LO –
5. Build success criteria-independent task/teacher input
6. Teacher input-eg modelling/creating/sharing a WAGOLL
7. Recap – refer to the LO, Success criteria and identified good practice.
8. Leaving 20 – 25 minutes for independent tasks
9. Plenary-recap and assess. Refer back to success criteria and LO

Teacher Checklist.

Lesson Structure	Classroom Environment
Decontextualised learning objectives allow children to understand with clarity the purpose of the lesson,	Children have adequate working space and the right high-quality resources to enable them to present their work with ease.
Learning Objectives are referred back to throughout the lesson to ensure children are clear as to what they are learning.	Seating and tables are used flexibly to support working in different contexts and for different purposes
Ascertaining prior knowledge-allows teachers to identify gaps in children's knowledge and address these quickly.	Curriculum displays include statements and questions to highlight the key learning points. Working walls for English and Maths offer relevant support to the current learning.
Engaging pupils in the process of identifying prior knowledge helps them to make links more quickly, activates prior learning ready for new learning to be 'build upon', helps children to make links and peaks their interest.	The layout of the classroom and provision and access to resources supports both independent and collaborative learning
Success Criteria (The knowledge, understanding and/or skills required to allow the children to achieve their L.O) are used to make it clear how to succeed. The success criteria can be given to pupils but is especially powerful when build WITH children	Metacognitive displays remind children of strategies that make them effective learners
WAGOLL (what a good one looks like)-sharing, creating, modelling a WAGOLL helps pupils see how to succeed and understand clearly the expectations	There are positive affirmations and interactions that raise self-esteem. These could celebrate children achieving their targets, moving towards their targets.
Modelling is clear and to the point.	There are displays of high quality finished work that reflects pride and perseverance, originality and creativity, independence and collaboration, and building on prior learning are displayed in a sensitive manner
All adults model the spoken and written language and vocabulary needed to effectively support pupil learning.	Diversity is celebrated in all forms. For example, resources including books and visual images reflect the family lives of pupils and their community
Questioning is used effectively (open, closed, deeper thinking using how and why) Key questions, prompts and scaffolds are available to support children's dialogue and thinking about learning.	An attractive and well –maintained classroom book/Thrive corner is accessible in all classrooms where children have access to a wide variety of books including topic based books and/or access to time to self-regulate.
Reference is made to the children's personalised targets to keep these a point of focus in learning.	Space is well used to promote seamless working and the classroom is clean and tidy to promote a sense of pride.
Pupils are appropriately challenged based on their prior attainment.	Clearly labelled first aid and Inhaler cupboard, Fire Safety and Evacuation Procedure displayed, Computer Safety Poster and IWB Health and Safety poster on display
There is use of displays to reflect and support on going learning through techniques such as working walls	All classes display alphabet and upper and lower case letters and an appropriate timeline of historical events
Plenaries are used effectively to draw together lessons, recap on learning and feedback. They can happen at any point through the lesson.	A class timetable and a visual timetable must be displayed in every classroom.
Lessons are adapted to ensure that pace of learning is not lost if children find the learning easy, or misconceptions or gaps are quickly addressed.	
TA support is well directed and impacts on learning	
All adults respond to any dysregulation using VRFs to enable the modification of behaviours which interrupt learning.	