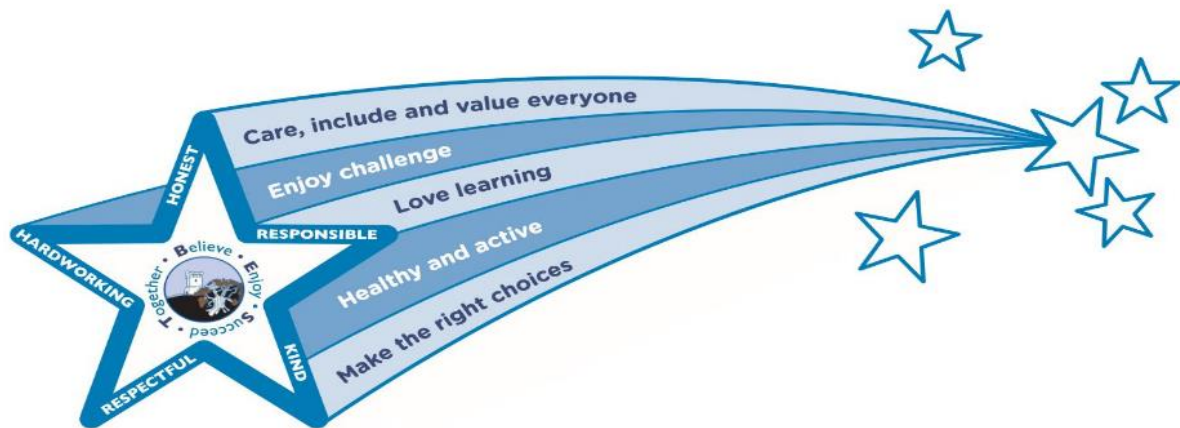# Whitehills Primary School

Learning Together

The Whitehills Way

(Our Shared Language of Learning)

Learning and Teaching Policy

August 2022

OUR RATIONALE

This policy sets out the key principles and expectations for ensuring all pupils across all stages receive the highest quality of teaching and a range of excellent learning opportunities across all curricular areas.

At Whitehills Primary School, we believe that learning should:

- be a rewarding and challenging experience for everyone
- enable all learners to make expected or accelerated progress in their learning and through this they will receive a sense of enjoyment
- be well planned by teachers and differentiated to meet the needs of all learners
- be planned to ensure all learners can develop the skills, knowledge and understanding they require to enable them to become successful learners, responsible citizens, confident individuals and effective contributors
- involve a range of pedagogical approaches which promote active listening, critical thinking and conceptual understanding
- develop learners who can work independently, co-operatively and who are clear about what they are trying to achieve, their progress and next steps

OUR VISION AND VALUES

Our vision statement is *Believe, Enjoy and Succeed Together (BEST).* At Whitehills we believe that children learn best when:

- they form positive, caring and mutually respectful relationships with their teachers, other adults across the school and their peers
- they are treated fairly and understand that equity might mean different approaches are used to support the needs of different children - not all children will be treated the same but all children will be treated fairly
- they are actively engaged in the learning process and teachers have high expectations of independence and critical thinking
- they are encouraged to give and receive feedback and act on it to improve their learning
- they are appropriately challenged with learning experiences which are relevant to their lives and interests and which are inspiring, motivating and enjoyable
- their learning is well planned and takes account of national guidance and reflects the ambitions of the school's Recovery Curriculum Rationale.

We strive to provide a learning environment that is supportive, safe and caring, and encourages resilience and a growth mindset. At Whitehills we have five Core Values for our children, staff and our wider school community as follows:

- *We are kind*
- *We are honest*
- *We are hardworking*
- *We are responsible*
- *We are respectful*

OUR AIMS AND LEARNING POWERS

At Whitehills Primary School we work with partners and members of the school community to provide a wealth of opportunities for learners to be challenged and develop to their full potential academically, emotionally and socially and to promote the highest quality of care and well-being possible. We will have a core focus in our work on equity and addressing barriers to learning. Our school aims are to:

- *care, include and value everyone*
- *enjoy challenge*
- *love learning*
- *be healthy and active*
- *make the right choices*

The school will work towards these aims by:

- promoting high quality learning and attainment
- providing a high quality learning environment
- valuing each other and ourselves
- working in partnership with parents, carers and the community
- supporting staff to be inspired and passionate about their own professional learning and the learning of their pupils

We have developed a set of core **Learning Powers** to help promote a shared language of learning.

Our Whitehills Learning Powers: They are Super Emoji characters which provide children with opportunities to think about how they are learning and how they can be successful. Our learning powers are:

Captain Concentrate	**The Incredible Improver**
 • managing distractions • getting lost in the task • doing one thing at a time • breaking things down • planning and thinking through • drawing diagrams and jotting down thoughts to think	 • always reviewing my work • taking small steps • identifying the best bits • improving one thing first • trying to be better than the last time • not comparing myself to others only myself
Doctor Don't Give Up	**Green Growth Guy**
 • practicing lots • keeping on going • trying new strategies • asking for help • starting again • taking a brain break	 • having a growth mindset • not worrying if it goes wrong • learning from mistakes • being excited to try new things
Curious Cat Woman	**Iron Imagination Man**
 • asking questions • noticing things • looking for patterns and connections • thinking of possible reasons • researching	 • being creative • letting my imagination go • thinking up new ideas and questions
Agent Enjoyable	**Group Girl**
 • feeling proud ot my achievements • feelings my neurons connecting • imagining my intelligence growing by the minute • using what I learn in in real life • knowing I can do it if I practice	 • saying when I don't understand • being kind when I disagree • explaining things to help others • being tolerant

HIGH QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING

At Whitehills Primary School we believe that high quality teaching will include the following:

- Caring and respectful **relationships** with children
- **High expectations and standards** for children's behaviour and quality of work
- Activities that require children to **recall knowledge** from previous lessons
- Clear communication and use of **learning intentions and success criteria.** Reference made to **Whitehills Learning Powers**
- Activities that allow the teacher to **find out what children know or can do already**
- Clear **teacher explanations and demonstrations** which hold the children's attention
- Activities that allow children to **put into practice** what they are being taught
- Appropriate levels of **support and challenge** and opportunities for children to **apply their learning in new/different situations.**
- Use of **questions** to make children think and to check for understanding
- Activities that get children **to discuss and learn with other children**
- Clear **feedback** to individual children and to the class about their learning
- Activities that **review progress and evaluate the impact of lessons**
- Use **resources effectively** to support learning - this may include other adults

In order to achieve the above vision of High Quality Teaching, Whitehills staff are committed to the following:

- **Planning effectively** at short, medium and long term stages
- **Tracking individual progress** in literacy, maths & numeracy and health and wellbeing. Staff track overall progress within CfE levels in September, January and June, and maintain detailed Progression and Assessment grids on an on-going basis. Staff engage in attainment and progress discussions each term and plan/review interventions required.
- Having a **mindset** that it is our job to make the biggest difference we can to the learning of all the children we teach
- **Communicating** information about children's progress with parents and if relevant, wider professionals. Please see section on Sharing the Learning with Parents/Carers for information on how we do this.
- **Evaluating the quality of learning and teaching** to support continuous improvement. This is discussed each term during PDMA meetings. Staff also maintain Personal and Professional Reflection Records (PPRR) to support on-going reflection and identification of areas for improvement.
- **Engaging in professional learning** to ensure secure and current subject and pedagogical knowledge (or which develops their knowledge and skills as a teacher)

We have created two graphics to share across the school community about:

- what high quality teaching looks like (Appendix 1)
- what a Whitehills Learner looks like (Appendix 2)

This will support parents, children and the school community to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in each classroom.

Appendix 3 is a table outlining the key features you can expect to see in a very good lesson at Whitehills.

KEY SKILLS

We fully recognise the importance of developing key skills for learning, life and work as part of our commitment to the national aim of 'Developing the Young Workforce.' We are also fully committed to ensuring children develop skills which are transferable across curricular areas through the provision of high quality inter-disciplinary learning opportunities. We will provide opportunities across the curriculum both in classrooms and outdoors to ensure all children develop skills in:

- the application of numeracy and literacy in real life and meaningful contexts
- communication
- digital literacy
- problem solving/investigative learning
- working with others/teamwork
- reflecting on and improving their own learning and performance (assessment capable learners)
- evaluating the work of the school and leading improvements in both learning and teaching

We will also focus on the development and progression of thinking skills including:

- creative thinking
- enquiry
- information processing
- reasoning/generalising
- evaluation

Bloom's Taxonomy of skills will be well understood by teachers and links to learning will be made explicit in lessons across all areas of the curriculum.
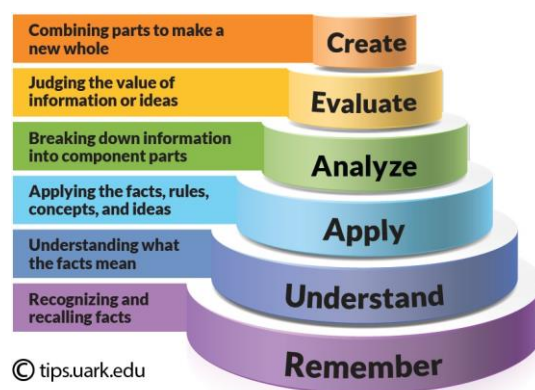
CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

We aim to provide as immersive a learning experience as possible to engage pupils further in their learning. Pupils across the school are involved in creating the learning environment in each classroom. All wall displays will have explicit links to the learning undertaken in the class. This may include a learning intention from one lesson or a summary of learning across a range of lessons. Where appropriate, these will include interactive displays where pupils can pin up notes or write on whiteboards. Staff have been trained in 'visuals for all' and use this to support children. Displays should inspire learning and celebrate the achievements of pupils. We have created a graphic to share our expectations of what a good wall display looks like (Appendix 4).

All classroom environments should be literacy and numeracy rich and organised in ways that promote and encourage independent and further learning opportunities. Flexible furniture can be used where possible to create a nurturing, homely and safe environment and to suit the different learning preferences of different pupils.

SUPPORT FOR LEARNING

We believe that all children should receive the support they need to help them learn in the best way they can. Support needs are identified through professional dialogue each term between SLT and class teachers (PDMA Meetings). These discussions take full account of teacher judgements related to progression in learning, assessment data and standardised test results, such as SNSAs, RWInc/spelling and Abacus assessments. The outcome of these discussions ensures the correct support is provided to the right children at the right time. This session (2022-23), we are trialling a member of SLT having a specific remit of ASN and Inclusion to drive ASN support in a focused and consistent way. In terms of levels of support, all staff adhere to the guidance outlined in Angus Council's Continuum of Need policy. Individualised Education Plans, Child's Plans, Behavioural Support Plans and Risk Assessments will be developed for some children in line with guidance contained in Angus Council's Additional Support for Learners' Policy. Parents and children will have a high level of ownership through collaboration in the creation and evaluation of key targets.

CELEBRATING CHILDREN'S SUCCESSES AND ENCOURAGING HIGH EXPECATIONS

We believe that it is so important to praise effort and achievement of our children rather than ability. As a result we have developed a simple system to do this called a **'Wow Wall'**. This operates in the following way:

- All children to have an area in the class to display a piece of work that they are proud of. Older children are encouraged to add a comment to this highlighting which learning powers they used to help them and why they are proud of this piece of work. Younger children will receive an Ask me why? sticker to promote discussion. Please see appendix 5 for a WAGOLL of a Wow wall.

SLT ROLE IN SUPPORTING HIGH QUALITY TEACHING

We believe that learning is the core business of our school and that continuous improvement in learning and teaching is our number one priority. SLT are committed to:

- developing a shared understanding of great teaching
- focusing professional learning on pedagogy
- recognising strengths and good practice, and supporting and challenging teachers to improve
- encouraging the use of data, especially analysing learner progress and achievement
- encouraging collaborative enquiry
- promoting a calm and nurturing environment
- allocating resources effectively, including the deployment of staff
- encouraging positive and supportive relationships

SHARING LEARNING AND PROGRESS WITH PARENTS

We believe it is vital to work in partnership with parents/carers and keep them updated regarding their child's progress. We undertake the following at all stages to keep parents informed:

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
Weekly • Two class learning posts to be uploaded to DoJo that include group/collage photos of all pupils and a brief comment regarding the learning • One assembly post to be uploaded weekly including the focus for assembly and group/collage photos of all pupils present	**Weekly** • Two class learning posts to be uploaded to DoJo that include group/collage photos of all pupils and a brief comment regarding the learning • One assembly post to be uploaded weekly including the focus for assembly and group/collage photos of all pupils present	**Weekly** • Two class learning posts to be uploaded to DoJo that include group/collage photos of all pupils and a brief comment regarding the learning • One assembly post to be uploaded weekly including the focus for assembly and group/collage photos of all pupils present	**Weekly** • Two class learning posts to be uploaded to DoJo that include group/collage photos of all pupils and a brief comment regarding the learning • One assembly post to be uploaded weekly including the focus for assembly and group/collage photos of all pupils present
Weekly • Class homework opportunities provided through Google Classroom and reading books/activities	**Weekly** • Class homework opportunities provided through Google Classroom and reading books/activities	**Weekly** • Class homework opportunities provided through Google Classroom and reading books/activities	**Weekly** • Class homework opportunities provided through Google Classroom and reading books/activities
Monthly • One class learning post to be uploaded to Twitter (using school twitter account), that includes group/collage photos of all pupils and a brief comment regarding the learning • SLT to post one twitter update monthly	**Monthly** • One class learning post to be uploaded to Twitter (using school twitter account), that includes group/collage photos of all pupils and a brief comment regarding the learning • SLT to post one twitter update monthly	**Monthly** • One class learning post to be uploaded to Twitter (using school twitter account), that includes group/collage photos of all pupils and a brief comment regarding the learning • SLT to post one twitter update monthly	**Monthly** • One class learning post to be uploaded to Twitter (using school twitter account), that includes group/collage photos of all pupils and a brief comment regarding the learning • SLT to post one twitter update monthly
August • Curriculum leaflet indicating planned learning and how parents can help to be shared with parents via DoJo	**October** • Curriculum leaflet indicating planned learning and how parents can help to be shared with parents via DoJo	**January** • Curriculum leaflet indicating planned learning and how parents can help to be shared with parents via DoJo	**May** • Curriculum leaflet indicating planned learning and how parents can help to be shared with parents via DoJo
September • Meet the Teacher	**November** • Parents Evening to	**March** • Parents Evening to	**June** • End of session

Event	report individual progress. P3-7 to trial Learner Led conference	report individual progress. P3-7 to trial Learner Led conference	reports shared with parents via DoJo portfolio that include information on progress, attainment and next steps
September Upload to DoJo Portfolio for each child • an example of an individual piece of maths/numeracy • an example of an individual piece of literacy • Examples uploaded should be marked and include teacher feedback	**December** Upload to DoJo Portfolio for each child • an example of an individual piece of maths/numeracy • an example of an individual piece of literacy • Examples uploaded should be marked and include teacher feedback	**March** Upload to DoJo Portfolio for each child • an example of an individual piece of maths/numeracy • an example of an individual piece of literacy • Examples uploaded should be marked and include teacher feedback	**May** Upload to DoJo Portfolio for each child • an example of an individual piece of maths/numeracy • an example of an individual piece of literacy • Examples uploaded should be marked and include teacher feedback
October/November • Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and/or Behaviour Support Plans reviewed and updated with parents and child inputting to the process		**February/March** • Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and/or Behaviour Support Plans reviewed and updated with parents and child inputting to the process	**May/June** • Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and/or Behaviour Support Plans reviewed and updated with parents and child inputting to the process

On-going/as required
• Child's Planning meetings timetabled 2/3 times per session depending on individual needs of child and level of support required
On-going/as required
• Class information updates e.g. reminders regarding PE, details on visitors to class, class news etc
On-going/as required
• Messages to parents to highlight good news/concerns regarding choices made

On-going throughout the school session
  • Family learning cafes – 1 per stage each session
  • Nursery Stay and Play days – 4 per session

EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy was developed in February 2022 and will be reviewed in February 2025. An additional section on 'Assessment' will be created and added to this policy in session 2023-24.

Shared language of learning – A Whitehills Teacher

A Whitehills Teacher WAGOLL

- loves children
- communicates regularly
- plans effectively at long, medium and short term
- differentiates effectively to take account of the needs of all learners
- shares learning intentions and success criteria clearly
- has high expectations for all children
- respects and cares for families
- models expected behaviours and attributes
- confident
- communicates clearly
- asks quality questions
- answers questions
- motivates and supports children and colleagues to improve
- is motivated to learn and do well
- challenges
- gives feedback linked to success criteria
- knows errors are learning opportunities
- has high expectations of self
- tracks pupil progress
- plans appropriate opportunities for assessment
- creates a safe, nurturing and inspiring learning environment
- supports children to give self and peer feedback
- promotes independent thinking and learning

Appendix 2

Shared Language of Learning – A Whitehills Learner (for Teachers)

Captain Concentrate (CC)

Incredible Improver (II)

Agent Enjoyable (AE)

Group Girl (GG)

Curious Catwoman (CCat)

Dr Don't Give Up (DDGU)

Iron Imagination Man (IIM)

Green Growth Guy (GGG)

A Whitehills Learner WAGOLL

Assessment capable
- co-constructs success criteria (CC)
- understands learning intentions (CC)
- constructs self and peer feedback (II)
- gives, seeks and acts on feedback (II)

Independent
- thinks for themselves (IIM)
- thinks critically and generalises (CCAT)
- resilient, keeps on going (DDGU)
- teaches self and others (GG)

Motivated to learn and do well
- motivates others to do their best (AE)
- is happy (AE)
- has high expectations of self (AE)
- polite and respectful (GG)

Confident
- asks questions (IIM)
- answers questions (CCAT)
- explains own thinking (GG)
- knows errors are learning opportunities (GGG)

Appendix 3 Key Features of a very good lesson at Whitehills

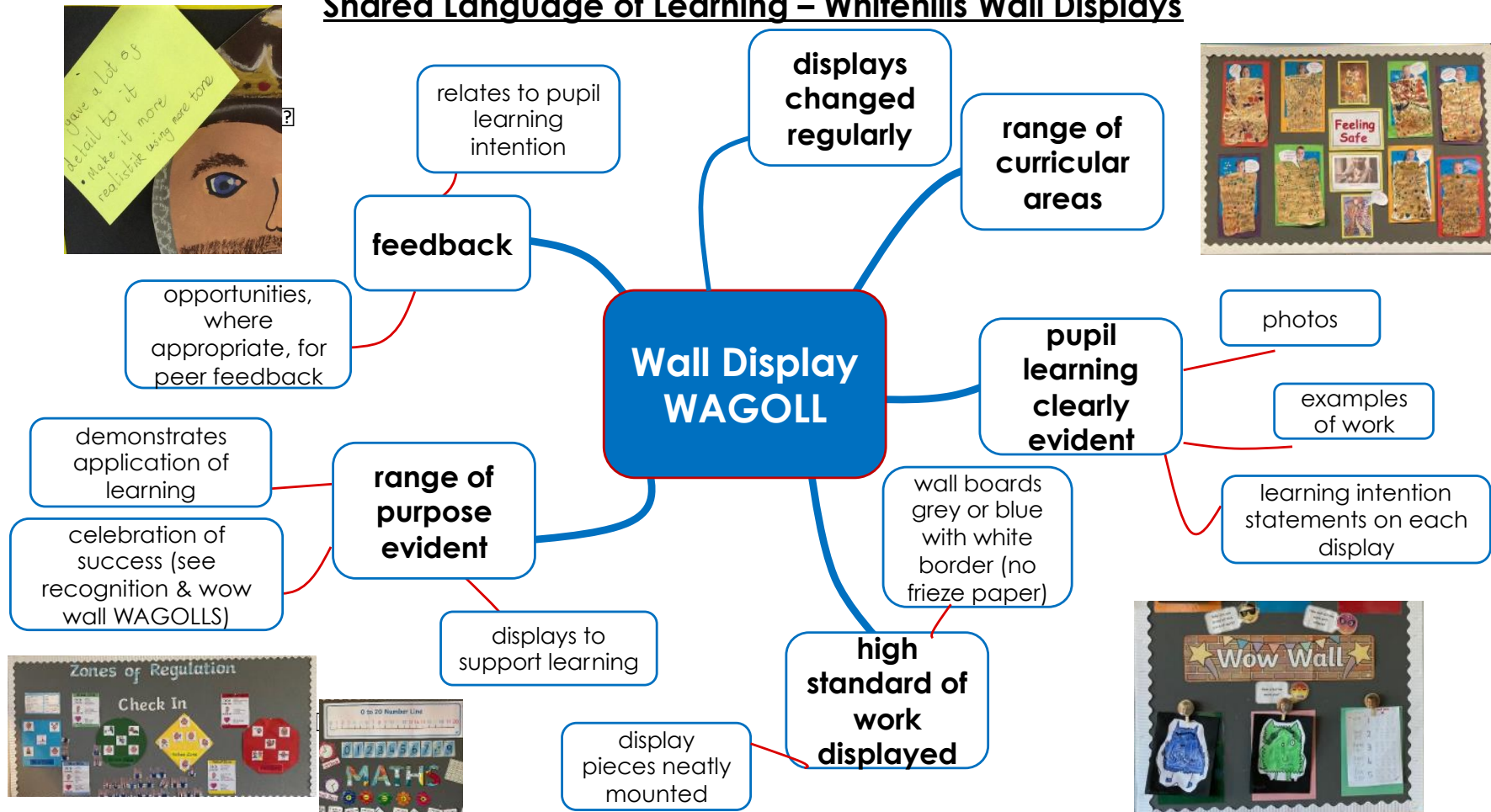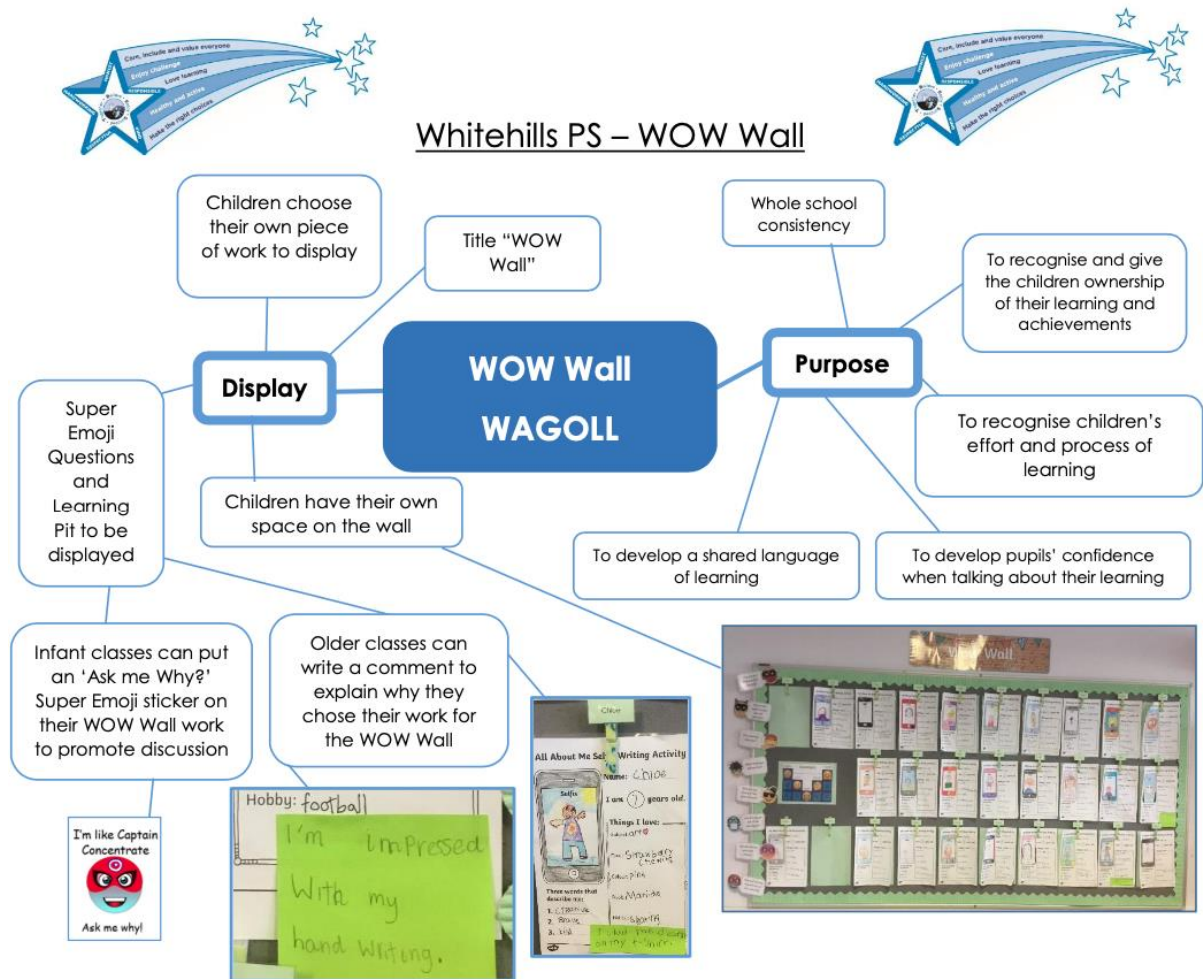| A very good lesson at Whitehills should comprise of all or most of the following |
|---|
| • Learning intention is clear and shared with pupils
• Reference is made to the Whitehills Learning Powers
• Success criteria, linked to the learning intention, are shared/developed with pupils and differentiated as appropriate. |
| • High expectation of success from both learners and the teacher
• Introduction has an engaging hook and clear purpose including links to skills required for Developing the Young Workforce
• Prior learning is consolidated /checked for and any required amendments are made to a planned lesson |
| • New learning is demonstrated/explained/modelled confidently and high- quality examples are used
• Clear, detailed instructions and explanations are given
• There may be a range of whole class, group and individual learning activities provided |
| • High quality oral work is included in all learning activities
• Children are fully encouraged to explain their thinking and mistakes are used to support the teaching and learning process
• Quality and inclusive questioning is used to ensure children are engaged in the lesson |
| • High quality interactions are evident - pupils are encouraged, expected to achieve and are extended in their learning
• Lessons are well paced and driven by the need to make progress and succeed
• Children are encouraged to be autonomous in their learning
• Independent learning is a key feature in all classrooms |
| • A range of assessment and feedback is used - before, throughout and after the learning
• Children can explain where they are going, how they are going to get there and what their next steps are with confidence
• Plenary session involves checking for learning and understanding |

Shared Language of Learning – Whitehills Wall Displays

Wall Display WAGOLL

relates to pupil learning intention

feedback

opportunities, where appropriate, for peer feedback

displays changed regularly

range of curricular areas

pupil learning clearly evident

photos

examples of work

learning intention statements on each display

demonstrates application of learning

range of purpose evident

celebration of success (see recognition & wow wall WAGOLLS)

displays to support learning

wall boards grey or blue with white border (no frieze paper)

high standard of work displayed

display pieces neatly mounted

Appendix 5

Whitehills PS – WOW Wall

WOW Wall WAGOLL

Display

- Children choose their own piece of work to display
- Title "WOW Wall"
- Super Emoji Questions and Learning Pit to be displayed
- Children have their own space on the wall
- Infant classes can put an 'Ask me Why?' Super Emoji sticker on their WOW Wall work to promote discussion
- Older classes can write a comment to explain why they chose their work for the WOW Wall

Purpose

- Whole school consistency
- To recognise and give the children ownership of their learning and achievements
- To recognise children's effort and process of learning
- To develop a shared language of learning
- To develop pupils' confidence when talking about their learning

I'm like Captain Concentrate
Ask me why!

Hobby: football
I'm impressed with my hand writing.

Summary of points from 'Outstanding Formative Assessment' by Shirley Clarke

- **Pupil Involvement:**
  "By involving children…their interest and motivation is increased and their achievement is greater because of this ownership…"
- **Praising effort and achievement rather than ability or personal attributes:** "Praising children's intelligence harms their motivation and their performance. Children love to be praised for their intelligence and talent, but if this is the norm, the minute they encounter an obstacle their confidence drops. If success means they are clever, than failure can only mean they are not."
- **Learning Powers:**
  "Meta-cognition is the term used to describe learning about learning, or what learning consists of. The Sutton Trust research gives its use a potential gain of 8 months and 'high impact for low cost' as the verdict…"
- **Develop a Growth Mindset:**
  "The growth mindset gives children the appropriate attitude and self-belief, but meta-cognition gives them the tools to be able to talk about and understand their learning, giving them a shared language and understanding…"