

# Alloway Primary School and Early Years Centre



## Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy Updated June 2024



Alloway Primary School

Policy for Effective Learning and Teaching



*"Curriculum for Excellence clearly articulates our aspiration to be a nation of successful learners, responsible citizens, effective contributors and confident*

*individuals so that everyone contributes to the sustainable economic growth of our country. Achieving this requires highly effective leadership at all levels which is grounded in the values of compassion, wisdom, justice and integrity."*  
(How Good is our School 4)

### Our Vision and Values



We embed our Vision and Values through all of our daily interactions, as well as our Relationships and Positive Behaviour policy. Wellbeing, is embedded through our work with the wellbeing indicators (SHANARRI) and underpin the Scottish Government policy, Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC), which is at the centre of everything we do.

### School as a Learning Organisation (SALO)

At Alloway Primary we use the integrated model of "school as a learning organisation" that enhances our capacity to change and focuses on:

- ✓ Developing and sharing a vision which is centred on all children and young people and is created and shared with all stakeholders.
- ✓ Creating and supporting continuous learning opportunities for all staff.
- ✓ Promoting collaborative learning amongst all staff.
- ✓ Establishing a culture of enquiry and innovation.
- ✓ Developing systems for exploring data and information and sharing this with stakeholders.
- ✓ Learning with and from our external environment including creating community and business links.
- ✓ Modelling and growing leadership opportunities including distributive leadership.

### Underpinning Principles

All Scottish schools follow the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) produced by the Scottish Executive. The Curriculum encompasses learning through the Four Contexts for Learning:

- ✓ The ethos and life of the school

- ✓ Curriculum areas
- ✓ Interdisciplinary learning
- ✓ Opportunities for personal achievement

The curriculum at Alloway Primary is continually evolving to reflect and respond to the needs of the school, the local authority and the Scottish Government, taking into account our non-denominational dimension and taking advantage of its unique historical and cultural status (*See Overarching Curriculum Statement updated on a yearly basis*). The approaches to learning and teaching that we use are key to supporting the effective delivery of the four contexts for learning. Learners will engage with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child through the four contexts for learning. Collectively, our approaches will ensure that our learners are receiving a school experience that is engaging and active, sets challenging goals, values pupil voice and takes account of the ways different learners progress.

All Scottish Early Years Centres and schools follow *Realising the Ambition: Being Me in the Early Years*. This refreshed early years national practice guidance for Scotland presents key information about the characteristics of child development based on research and evidence. It explores the range of **interactions**, **experiences** and **spaces** we need to provide for babies and young children to help them learn and grow best from their earliest days through to being a young child in early primary school. 'Realising the Ambition: Being Me' increases expectations of high quality but still provides the necessary support for all who work in the early years sector and beyond.

### Aims

Our aim is to enable our pupils to be resilient, resourceful, responsible learners who have the confidence, skills and attitudes to be successful life-long achievers. We aim to promote an inclusive learning culture so that pupils engender a love of learning and the desire to continue to learn. We aim to give our pupils every opportunity to succeed.

Through this policy we aim to promote best practice and to establish consistency across the whole school to meet the needs of all pupils. It aims to ensure that the children are provided with high quality learning experiences that lead to a consistently high level of pupil achievement and attitude. We are committed to equipping our pupils with skills and tools that will develop successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors ready to be citizens of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

### Planning for Effective Learning

Effective planning lies at the heart of providing a high quality learning environment and is very much linked to effective assessment. At Alloway Primary, all teaching staff will ensure:

- ✓ Well planned experiences and outcomes that reflect the principles for curriculum design
- ✓ Opportunities for developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work
- ✓ Appropriate support and challenge to enable every child to achieve their full potential
- ✓ Rigorous self evaluation takes place
- ✓ Use of both summative and formative assessment and feedback, raising attainment and achievement for all
- ✓ Opportunities for our young people to participate responsibly in decision making and to contribute as leaders and role models
- ✓ Staff use One Note online planning and have a responsibility to follow school planning procedures to ensure consistency and progression throughout the school.

### **Teaching for Effective Learning**

To support all learners to develop the four capciites, we employ a variety of teaching and learning approaches:

- ✓ Play Pedagogy
- ✓ Active learning
- ✓ Child Centred learning
- ✓ Co-operative learning
- ✓ Interdisciperlinary learning
- ✓ Outdoor learning
- ✓ Global citizenship
- ✓ Enquiry
- ✓ Research
- ✓ Independent learning
- ✓ Higher Order Thinking Skills

**At Alloway Primary we have developed our Non-negotiables to ensure consistency across the school.**



# OUR ALLOWAY EXPECTATIONS

Within Alloway Primary these are the expectations for high quality learning, teaching and assessment:

- Planning (online planning used for weekly, medium term, long term)
- Assessment:
  - Formative AifL strategies
  - Peer and Self Assessments
  - Ongoing teacher feedback - make, say, write, do (marking policy)
  - Summative assessments and skills tracking (Assessment calendar)
  - Learning Intention and Co-Created Success Criteria
- Differentiation - challenge/support (fluid groupings)
- Engaging Starter (hook) and teaching of main learning point
- Reflection time (plenary, daily/weekly round up and target time)
- Higher order questioning
- Pace
- Variety of teaching and learning approaches eg, play pedagogy, active approaches, MTV routines, collaborative learning, independent/paired/group activities, research based tasks, digital technologies to enhance learning, tasks to promote creativity
- Tidy, well-organised learning environment where displays are meaningful, current and celebrate learning
- Positive, welcoming ethos
- Behaviour expectations are high and underpinned by our school values
- Relationship Policy and Class Charters (RRS) evident in class
- Jotters are well presented in line with Marking Policy, they include a range of evidence of learning and feedback
- Learning Journals are used to share class stories and capture class learning
- Each child has a Learning Profile which is linked to personal targets, includes evidence of learning and celebrates success.
- Children are involved in creating personal targets and can talk about these.



Assessment



*Assessment approaches should help learners to show their progress through the levels and enable them to demonstrate their achievements in a range of ways which are appropriate to learning.* **Building the Curriculum 5 (2011)**

In Alloway Primary assessment is planned as part of learning and teaching as these are inextricably linked, with each one informing the other. Evidence is gathered from across significant aspects of learning in a holistic way which provides robust, valid and reliable assessment information. The range of evidence gathered supports teachers in reaching a judgement of where children are in their learning.

The range of information and evidence gathered is used to monitor and track progress and achievement - a key aspect of raising attainment. Through planning and tracking meetings, we ensure that the pace of learning is appropriate for each learner. Learning is evaluated termly using Alloway Primary Assessment grids to inform planning and identify whole class, group and individual next steps in learning.

Assessment is for Learning (AifL) strategies are used and formative assessment supports learning, informing pupils of how they can improve their work. Pupils are also involved in discussions about their learning and have their own personal Learning Journals. At times, standardised tests are used to help teachers assess pupil progress, identify strengths and diagnose barriers to learning. GL assessments are administered in P3-P7 to assess Literacy and Numeracy. Children in P1, P4 and P7 also take part in Scottish National Assessments.

Education Scotland benchmarks provide clarity on the national standards expected within each curriculum area at each level. They set out clear lines of progression from Early to Fourth Levels (First to Fourth Levels in Modern Languages). Their purpose is to make clear what learners need to know and be able to do to progress through the curriculum levels, and to support consistency in teachers' professional judgements.

For reporting purposes, South Ayrshire Council have identified 4 key stages of progress which make clear the importance of how much (breadth) and how well (challenge & application) a child has learned when making assessment judgement: B (**B**eginning to make progress), S (making **S**ome progress), G (making **G**ood progress) and V (making **V**ery good progress). These align with *Building the Curriculum 5 a framework for assessment: reporting document* and the Benchmarks.

Parent / teacher meetings are held twice yearly. During these meetings teachers will report children's progress with regards to CfE levels and parents have the opportunity to discuss this and to view their child's work. Parents are welcome to discuss their child's progress at

other times. Those wishing to do so should contact the school to arrange a mutually suitable appointment. All parents will receive a written report in June of each school year.

### **Meeting the Needs of all learners**

We work to meet the needs of all pupils, providing extra support for pupils who will benefit from this, either for a short time or for an extended period. We also aim to challenge more able pupils providing extension work, challenging tasks or activities identified as appropriate to their needs.

In Alloway Primary we ensure that children are provided with work that is appropriate to their stage and development and tracking meetings are held 2x yearly. Targets may be achieved through class, group and individual teaching approaches enabling children to succeed. However, pupils may, at some point in their school life, experience a learning difficulty or barrier to learning of some sort. This could be due to ill health or family circumstances.

Class teachers are responsible for teaching all the children in their class and further support is provided by Support for Learning teachers, an EAL teacher, Pupil Support Assistants and members of the management team. This support may take the form of direct tuition, advice to the class teacher, provision of appropriate materials and practical help within the classroom. We also have in place several groups to support children's learning, addressing identified needs and barriers to learning. Fiona Meney (HT) is the school's Support for Learning Coordinator. The school continues to have excellent relationships with Health, Psychological Services, Social Work and other agencies. Regular meetings are held with Claire Masterman, our school Educational Psychologist to discuss progress in the identified area of support.

When children are experiencing specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, parents will be contacted to discuss progress and explore ways in which further support may be given. Parents are also encouraged to contact the school if they feel their child's needs are not being met, or could be addressed more appropriately.

We will be happy to give advice and information on specific learning difficulties. There may already be strategies in place to help deal with any problems that teachers have identified. However, if not, assessments may be carried out to establish the nature and severity of the problem your son or daughter is facing. These may involve specialist help and advice from an Educational Psychologist. We will keep you and your child fully informed of the results of these assessments.

These approaches ensure we comply with The Education (Additional Support for Learning)(Scotland) Act 2009.



## Quality Assurance

Our quality assurance is based on "How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare" and "How Good is our School 4." Across the session we will plan quality assurance to ensure effective planning, assessment, learning and teaching.

- ✓ SLT will ensure that the yearly quality assurance calendar is updated and implemented with staff.
- ✓ Staff will engage in planning blocks three times a session and then meet with SLT for a planning conversation to discuss forward planning and planned assessments.
- ✓ Staff will engage with tracking conversations with SLT throughout the session, these conversations triangulate with planning conversations.
- ✓ Staff will engage with classroom observations through the form of direct observations by SLT, learning walks by SLT and peer observations.

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