



Creative Curriculum and Assessment Policy

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Policy Author:	RGE
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The Ethos and Values of Our School

Green Lane Church of England Primary is a rural school in the heart of Teesdale and at the centre of our local community. We offer a fantastic education based around achievement and success in a nurturing, holistic environment. At Green Lane we see the ultimate purpose of education as the promotion of “life in all its fullness” (St John’s Gospel, chapter 10, verse 10).

Here education is about more than just academic achievement; it is about developing young people who can flourish in all areas of their lives developing the intellectual, spiritual, moral and physical attributes, becoming proud and respectful members of our community. Our deeply Christian ethos and values are central to the experiences our children have each day as part of ‘Team GL.’

Introduction

Green Lane CE Primary School, through a partnership of pupils, parents and staff, supported by the wider community, is committed to developing the child’s potential by preparing each individual for life. Through this partnership and by providing a broad and balanced creative curriculum, our school aims to nurture the child’s social, emotional, intellectual, physical and spiritual growth to help towards a greater understanding of the world in which each child now lives. Our aim is to ensure that through a range of teaching and learning strategies and a relevant and creative curriculum, each child achieves their own potential. The school operates an ‘assessment without levels’ ethos, where each child is given the opportunity to achieve at least their maximum potential. Staff at Green Lane CE Primary School have the highest aspirations for each and every child, no matter what their starting points may be.

Rationale

An effective school requires all partners to share common goals and purposes. These lead to quality teaching and learning with high expectations and improved standards which enable pupils and equip them for their future lives and learning. Creativity improves pupils’ self-esteem, motivation and achievement. Pupils who are encouraged to think creatively and independently become:

- more interested in discovering things for themselves
- more open to new ideas
- keen to work with others to explore ideas
- willing to work beyond lesson time when pursuing an idea or vision

As a result, their pace of learning, levels of achievement and self-esteem increase.

Creativity prepares pupils for life. By providing rich and varied contexts for pupils to acquire, develop and apply a broad range of knowledge, understanding and skills, the curriculum should enable pupils to think creatively and critically, to solve problems and

to make a difference for the better. It should enable pupils to respond positively to opportunities, challenges and responsibilities, to manage risk and to cope with change and adversity.

Creative thinking and behaviours will be promoted in all national curriculum subjects and in religious education.

Scope

This document applies to all irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religious beliefs/faith tradition, sexual orientation, age or any other of the protected characteristics (Single Equalities Act 2010). The school respects the rights of the children and values the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). In particular this policy supports Articles 3 and 28.

Aims

- To work together to share understanding and build commitment to the aims of the school.
- To agree and provide a broadly balanced and creative curriculum within the definitions of the National Curriculum.
- To work within the Every Child Matters framework.
- To identify, disseminate and promote good practice in all areas of the curriculum throughout the school.
- To broaden perspectives to include all aspects of the life of the school.
- To ensure that taught curriculum supports, extends and enriches the whole curriculum and ethos of the school.

Requirements and Expectations

Green Lane CE Primary School will:

- Inform parents via the school brochure and newsletters of creative opportunities, projects and expectations.
- Provide suitable support in respect of SEND children so that they gain full access to the curriculum.
- Invite parents to take part in as many opportunities as is possible.

Green Lane CE Primary School expects its staff to:

- Pursue a learning challenge approach.
- Offer a range of challenging, creative thinking experiences in their teaching.
- Provide an interesting and stimulating learning environment.
- Actively encourage pupils to question, make connections, envisage what might be and explore ideas. Promote and reward imagination and originality.
- Ask open-ended questions to help pupils see things from different perspectives.

- Value and praise what pupils do and say. Establish an atmosphere in which they feel safe to say things, take risks and respond creatively.
- Create a fun, relaxed working environment, encouraging pupils to be adventurous and explore ideas freely.
- Create conditions for quiet reflection and concentration, encouraging pupils to work imaginatively.
- Provide extended cross-subject projects that give pupils opportunities to take greater control of their learning, work together and make connections between different areas of their learning.
- Avoid over-compartmentalised teaching.
- Show and share tangible changes that result from creativity.
- Encourage, recognise and reward pupils' creativity.
- Give pupils opportunities to work with others from their class, year group and different age groups.
- Continue their own professional development in creativity.
- Provide opportunities for extracurricular activities.

Children are expected to:

- Question and challenge ideas.
- Make connections and see relationships.
- Explore ideas, keeping options open envisaging what might be.
- Reflect critically on ideas, actions and outcomes.
- Be offered extra-curricular activities which extend skills knowledge and foster creativity.
- Be offered opportunities to work with external practitioners, and experience different arts and cultures through visits and visitors.
- Be unafraid to fail and resilient enough to try again.

Special Educational Needs (SEND)

Curriculum planning will take account of children with special educational needs and / or disabilities. Work will be appropriately differentiated to enable every child reach their full potential. This document should be read in conjunction with the school's Disability Accessibility Plan and Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities Policy.

More Able Children

Pupils who are exceptionally gifted will be given more opportunity to discover things for themselves, thinking creatively and critically to solve problems, working in innovative and enterprising ways. They should be given the opportunity of challenges and responsibilities, to manage risk and to cope with change and adversity.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Leadership Team and subject leaders will use following strategies to monitor the whole curriculum:

- Monitoring planning files.
- Action planning and annual curriculum review.
- Monitoring reports from observation, planning and sampling of pupils work.
- Review of targets and other assessments.
- Attendance at CPD and dissemination of information.
- Review and redevelopment of the School Improvement Plan.

Assessing Without Levels

Following the introduction of a new National Curriculum framework from September 2014, the government removed level descriptors.

With levels removed and the focus now on raising the achievement of every pupil, Green Lane CE Primary School's governors, leaders and teachers chose a new way to measure pupil attainment and progress focused on a 'mastery style' curriculum. This requires all staff in the school to have high expectations for all children as the aim is to have as many children as possible accessing the learning that is linked to their year group.

Whilst the school acknowledges that this will not always be possible, especially for children with SEN support plans or EHIC plans, the goal is to have as many children in a year group as possible accessing age related learning. It is also the policy to deepen understanding within a specific year group's curriculum and not move children up to the next year's learning. Differentiation is about deepening understanding and developing skills through challenge and questioning within each year group's curriculum.

Green Lane CE Primary School's Assessment System

The new curriculum required the implementation of a new system for reporting pupil progress both for parents, staff in school, senior leaders and not least the pupils themselves. The principles that underpin this new assessment system are that every child can achieve: teachers and staff at Green Lane CE Primary School have the mindset, 'What do I need to do next to enable a child in my class to achieve?' The new National Curriculum objectives are used as the expectations for ALL children wherever possible.

Children are expected to make age appropriate progress – 6 steps in 12 months. More than this will be seen as outstanding progress and less will be below expected. Formal tests are rarely used to gauge the level children are working at and there is a reliance instead on seeing progress 'in books' across an academic year and trusting in teacher judgements.

Green Lane CE Primary School has a partnership approach where pupils know what progress they are making and what further skills they need to work on to improve. The school operates a simple and clear assessment system for numeracy, writing, science and reading that is accessible (usually in the back of children's books)

Green Lane CE Primary School's assessment and reporting system includes:

- Ongoing assessment by the class teacher throughout each lesson, through questioning, observation and dialogue.
- Children knowing what they are being asked to learn and more importantly, why.
- Objectives that are discussed, agreed with or formulated by the children during each lesson; work is then assessed against these objectives.
- Three way feedback, pupil, peer, teacher, with clearly identified next steps – this could be written or verbal feedback.
- Regular termly scrutiny of the pupils' work by senior leaders, focusing on numeracy, literacy, science and the wider curriculum.

All of the above feeds into the school's termly assessments of the children in the school. A judgement will be made to decide which of the objectives for reading, writing, science, maths and the wider curriculum each child is secure in. From here teachers will decide on a pupil's individual progress and set them challenging targets for the following term.

Tracking Progress Over Time:

Green Lane CE Primary School has moved away from a summative assessment process based on tests. Progress is now shown in books and assessment protocols reflect this.

The curriculum sets out clearly what is expected from children in a particular year group – this is Green Lane's starting point. The school has adopted the word 'stage' to replace 'year', so that children will be working on a particular stage in reading, writing, numeracy and the wider curriculum throughout the year. This stage refers to the corresponding year group in the national curriculum. A child working at stage two is accessing the year 2 curriculum, a child on stage five is working within the year 5 curriculum, and so on.

The stages are further broken down into six discrete sections, *below (B)*, *below working (BW)*, *working towards (WT)*, *working at standard (WS)*, *securely at standard (S)* and *showing greater depth (SGD)*. Progress will reflect these six sections, so that a child may be a 1B in reading showing that they are currently accessing the year one curriculum but at a very early stage. A 1WT child is also working within the year one curriculum but they have gained more skills and are close to the 1WS stage which is the standard level the school would like all year one children to be working at by the end of the year. A child at a 1S is working well within the year one stage and is above the national average. Finally there is the 1SGD which shows that a particular child is working at an outstanding level and is very confident in all aspects of the year one curriculum; this category is used to determine if a child is working at *greater depth*. To

keep expectations high it has been decided that no pupil can achieve the standard level within their year group unless they are secure in at least 65% of the objectives.

In rare cases children may be working below their age related stage, perhaps these children will have SEN support plans or EHC plans. These children may be accessing the stage below, so a year 5 pupil may be accessing learning from the stage four curriculum showing that they are working a year behind age related expectations. The school would hope that this would not continue for long and that children will access their age related curriculum as soon as was appropriate.

Key Objectives:

Each subject has its own set of objectives, which the school has grouped into corresponding assessment grids. The grids are an indication to both staff, parents and pupils of how children are progressing and what the next steps in their learning need to be. Key objectives have been identified for each stage, these are the skills the school feels are the most important. To achieve the *standard* level in a stage a child must have met all of the key objectives. For children working within a stage that is below their age related expectation (e.g. if a year 4 pupil is accessing the stage two level) they must be rapidly taught the key objectives and then advanced to the next stage. By doing so Green Lane CE Primary School is promoting rapid progress and setting high aspirations for all its pupils.

More Able Children:

Children who have securely met their end of year objectives will then be assessed to see whether they are exceeding or achieving greater depth for their age group. Rather than moving onto the next year's curriculum these children will work on 'securing' their knowledge through the application of skills in different challenge contexts – they will be deepening their learning.

Reporting To Parents:

Green Lane CE Primary School reports termly to parents via a 'Pupil Progress Report'. This will tell parents whether their child is *working towards*, *working at* or *working above* age related expectations within a particular stage. Discussions at parent consultation meetings will be based on the stages a child is working at.

Scrutinising Assessment:

Each term the senior leadership team undergo a monitoring of the assessment data sent in by teaching staff. They scrutinise the data to ensure it matches the evidence in children's books.

Early Years Foundation Stage:

Children in the foundation stage are assessed against the 'Prime and Specific areas of Learning' in the EYFS profile. Assessments will be based on observation of daily activities and events that are purely child initiated. At the end of Reception for each strand, teachers will judge whether a child is meeting the level of development expected to achieve the 'Early Learning Goal':

- *Emerging*, not yet reached the expected level of development.
- *Expected*, at the expected level of development.
- *Exceeding*, beyond the expected level of development for their age.

The Early Years provision at Green Lane CE Primary School is inspired by a 'Reggio Emilia and Nature' pedagogy. The school values every child as a strong, capable and resilient learner, rich with wonder and knowledge. Green Lane CE Primary School follows the deep curiosity and potential of the children in the setting and the fascinations and interests, which help them to learn about the world and their place within it.

Children are viewed as equal participants in their learning and adults ensure their thoughts, ideas and questions are valued. Children are supported to discover the answers to their own questions and develop their own knowledge through investigation, exploration and discovery.

Staff observe children and use learning journeys and displays to create visual learning allowing children to reflect and revisit their achievements. It also allows them to consolidate and extend learning.

The majority of the learning, which takes place, is child led and the children's interests and voice is at the centre of all the school does. Using visual learning, staff encourage children to return to any previous learning and then lead practitioners to whatever they would like to discover next. The educators scaffold this learning by providing inspiring provocations and with thought provoking questions to create a deeper level of understanding.

As stated in Reggio Emilia ethos, Green Lane CE Primary School believes the environment is the third teacher. Its aim is to provide rich learning areas to inspire children. An environment uses natural light, order, natural materials, provocations and beauty to provide possibilities and wonder. The school believes every area, furnishing and resource has a purpose, every corner is used to its fullest. This is reflected both in the foundation stage and in the wider school environment.

Practitioners reflect daily on their space, making sure children are fully engaged and stimulated. The setting intends to provide a welcoming, home like feeling, which will nurture and encourage children's thinking and development. Green Lane CE Primary School uses a creative curriculum based around the children's interests to spark curiosity, independence and self-discovery.

Staff in the foundation stage will guide but not overtake; staff observe, listen then provide opportunities to explore. Adults try to capture the children's thinking process

using the Learning Journeys, recording the children's thinking through drawing, dance, music, painting, modelling and any other way the children express their thoughts and creativity. Green Lane CE Primary School is passionate about child-centred learning.