Westerton Primary School

Learning and Teaching Policy

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November 2020

Learning and Teaching Policy

This policy captures how we, as a school, plan to achieve and sustain effective learning and teaching across all curricular areas and ensure we are striving to enable all our young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens. It also frames how we are developing teachers within the context of the East Dunbartonshire Council strategy for raising attainment and achievement. We strive to close the gap between the most and least disadvantaged young people and provide opportunity to ensure our children are equipped with skills for learning, life and work, and can gain a positive and sustainable school leaver destination.

Our staff demonstrate commitment to career long professional learning and development. Ongoing professional learning opportunities and robust self-evaluation procedures ensure that pedagogy and practice are current and in keeping with the needs of our young people and school community, as well as local and national priorities. In addition, opportunity is provided for staff to share good practice and develop professional skills, and the knowledge and understanding to continually improve and better their teaching practice. Frequent professional dialogue and learner feedback ensure we are meeting the needs of all young people within Westerton Primary. Our commitment to pupil voice enables our young people to help shape and advise the learner experience and our pupil led learning and teaching group frequently reflect on best practice and ways to improve.

We have a shared lesson format to provide consistency in our learning and teaching and ensure the learning experience of our young people is effective and well supported.

Learning Intentions	Evidence of Success	Feedback
Peer and Self Assessment	Differentiation	Effective Questioning
Active Learning	HOT Skills	Plenary

Our school is:

- A safe, **supportive** and stimulating environment in which **relationships** are placed at the centre of what we do
- A **team** of respectful, tolerant, open minded citizens
- A community where everyone **aspires** to be the very best they can be
- A community of **resilient** lifelong learners
- A centre of excellence where all achieve **success**

The Role of Parents

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We inform parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- Holding parents' information evenings
- Sending information to parents at the start of each term in which we outline the topics that the children will be studying
- Sending an annual report in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can improve further
- Explaining to parents how they can support their children with homework
- We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies.

We would like parents to:

- Ensure their child has the best attendance record possible
- Ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and PE kit
- Inform the school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school
- Promote a positive attitude towards the school and learning in general
- Fulfil the requirements set out in the home/school agreement
- Deliver home learning expectation – support pupils in accessing Teams to ensure they are able to participate in live sessions and to enable them to access assignments, complete and upload them

As outlined in the CfE *Building the Curriculum 3* document (BtC3), learner entitlements are key to teaching and learning. "Every learner is entitled to personal support to enable them to gain as much as possible from the opportunities that CfE offers".

- Challenge and Enjoyment
- Breadth
- Progression
- Depth
- Personalisation and Choice
- Coherence
- Relevance

To achieve the best for our pupils we have organised our teaching practice under five key areas:

- Ethos within the classroom and school
- Organisation and management of the learning environment
- Teaching strategies and techniques
- Planning and assessment
- Quality assurance

Ethos within the classroom and school

All adults should ensure that:
- They provide a positive role model
- They listen to learners and are approachable
- Good quality relationships between learners, and learners and adults are actively fostered
- Expectations of pupils are appropriately high, and pupils are aware of this
- Good order and discipline are evident with pupils working on task
- There is a challenging but supportive ethos in the classroom
- Opportunities to raise pupil's self-esteem are identified and capitalised upon
- Self-belief is encouraged
- Pupils feel valued and their contributions matter
- Genuine praise and encouragement are given
- Achievement in its widest sense is recognised and celebrated
- A consistent approach to inclusive learning
- Equality of opportunity is actively sought, and stereotyping avoided
- Pupil work is respectfully displayed in classrooms, around the school and in the community

Organisation and management of the learning environment

- Materials and equipment are in good order, labelled, tidily stored and easily accessible to pupils
- Only resources relevant to current work are in the classroom
- Resources relevant to pupils ages and abilities and to current classwork are available and used well by pupils
- There are clear classroom routines for collecting and giving out work
- The system for retrieval and return of resources is clearly understood by pupils
- Pupils have a labelled storage area or drawer which they are encouraged to keep tidy
- The provision and organisation of furniture takes account of pupils' size, safety and needs
- Pupils' work is displayed attractively, is appropriately captioned and changed regularly

The supportive learning environment

Teachers are responsible for providing a caring, supportive and stimulating learning environment in which all children are helped to reach their emotional and academic potential. Children learn best when they feel safe to take on challenges, are interested and motivated and feel valued. We recognise the importance of building positive self-esteem in children.

The essentials of positive self-esteem

- **Belonging:** Each child has a contribution to make, we value and encourage these
- **Aspirations:** Every pupil is encouraged to work towards their achievable goal. Teachers express high aspirations for themselves and the children they teach
- **Safety:** Consistency in expectations and standards help pupils feel safe. Clear boundaries are set, and good behaviour recognised and rewarded
- **Identity:** A sense of self knowledge is supported by the belief that individuality is not threatened by undue pressure to conform. We respect difference and encourage children to learn from and thrive within our diverse community
- **Challenge:** Acquiring coping strategies are an important part of development and learning. Children are taught to take risks and learn through mistakes

Teaching strategies and techniques

- Pupils must have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. Success criteria must be generated with pupils and quality feedback given based on agreed outcomes
- Assignments and activities must be relevant and meaningful to pupils
- Home learning activities must be interesting and engaging offering opportunities to extend, consolidate, apply and/or reinforce learning as appropriate
- Opportunities to use the local community, learning outdoors and relevant field trips should be included in plans
- Learning should be an active and engaging experience

Key prompts for planning and delivering a lesson

Am I crystal clear about what I want the children to be able to do/understand/know at the end of the lesson?	Is the learning objective in child-friendly language?	Have I thought about the steps to success and planned the success criteria in advance? Are the children going to be involved in formulating the success criteria?
Have I thought about the questions I will need to ask to deepen children's understanding/assess learning?	Have I thought about how I am going to engage and motivate the children at the start and during the lesson?	Have I thought about how I will meet the needs of all learners, including the more able? Are activities challenging and designed to deepen understanding?
How are pupils going to assess their own learning or that of their peers?	Have I thought about how I will meet the needs of the EAL learners in my class? E.g. What visuals will I use in the lesson?	Am I giving the children thinking time and talking time before answering questions?
Am I going to be introducing new vocabulary to the children?	Have I made sure children are not going to be sitting passively for long periods?	Have I included any time for pupils to respond to marking from previous lesson?
How am I going to meet the learning styles of all pupils?	Have I shared the planning with my teaching assistant? Is he/she clear who she is supporting and how?	Have I got a balance of teacher instruction, intervention and children working independently?
How am I going to conduct my plenary?	Have I planned opportunities for pupils to talk about their learning in pairs and groups?	

We Learn:

10% of what we READ

20% of what we HEAR

30% of what we SEE

50% of what we SEE and HEAR

70% of what is DISCUSSED with OTHERS

80% of what is EXPERIENCED PERSONALLY

95% of what we TEACH TO SOMEONE ELSE

William Glasser

Effective learning results in:

- Feeling you can do more
- Explaining what you have learned
- Applying it to other situations
- Teaching it to someone else
- Feeling good about yourself
- A sense of mastery

We offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways. These include:

- Investigation and problem solving
- Research and discovery
- Group and paired work
- Independent work
- Whole class work
- Enquiry-based learning
- Play
- Questioning
- Use of ICT to support and facilitate learning
- Fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest
- Creative activities

Working walls

Every class should have a working wall. This should reflect the work currently being studied in each of the subjects. It should include:

- Children's questions
- Key vocabulary
- Visuals and artefacts to stimulate thinking
- Stimulating and interactive displays

Displays

The aim of display is to enhance and accelerate learning and to build self-esteem and belonging. We use displays to support and reinforce learning. Displays should aid recall, stimulate further thinking, give new information, make connections, celebrate achievement, remind children of rules and targets and motivate children towards further learning. Each child should have the opportunity to have work displayed in school.

Each class should have

- Literacy and maths displays, as well as working walls
- A class charter that effectively displays the school's values (Happiness, Believe, Achieve) and expectations (Be Ready, Be Respectful, Be Safe)
- Learning tools in the form of key words and questions for topic/literacy/maths, posters, prompts, number lines, spelling aids, punctuation pyramids, word banks etc.
- Marking codes and traffic light self-assessment systems
- Esteem raising, well-presented displays of high-quality children's' work that reflects their achievements
- Positive inspirational slogans
- Interactive displays reflecting current topic to promote investigation and curiosity including artefacts
- Displays that reflect the make-up of the school population i.e. positive images of culturally diverse groups, examples of community languages and images that challenge stereotypes of gender and disability
- Visual timetable on display at all times during the day, using symbols where appropriate

The present learning experience is explicitly cited between what has been learned and what is to come. Learning is incremental, not packaged into discrete units; effectively connecting the elements of the learning journey enables pupils to see and make progress. The way lessons and units of work are structured reflects our understanding of the learning process.

Connect

- Topic and units of work are introduced by sharing the big picture; this orientates the learner by giving an overview and shows how the learning will be organised
- Summarise what is to come and provide initial exposure to key ideas and vocabulary. By doing this we aim to engage curiosity and stimulate interest
- Link the learning to previous and future learning

Describe the outcomes

- Learning intentions and success criteria are shared, prominently displayed and referred to as a key element of each lesson
- Outcomes and reasons are made explicit
- Targets for writing and maths are explicitly referred to and the skills needed to achieve them taught at the start of and throughout lessons

Activate

- Give key information and vocabulary needed for the lesson
- Use a multi-sensory approach
- Questions and engage curiosity
- Use speaking and listening activities with thinking time
- Use a variety of groupings
- Make it memorable - use props, practical/physical, stimulating resources, ICT/digital technologies and music
- Ensure tasks are clearly understood by using questioning, recall and 'traffic light' systems, regular feedback/learning conversations

Demonstrate

- Provide opportunities for children to show they know and can transfer their skills
- Take into account multiple intelligences by allowing children choice in how to present/share their understanding
- Teach specific skills required to access the learning in the lesson/unit of work
- Use movement as a demonstration and memory tool
- Use brain breaks to enhance learning potential
- Provide opportunities for collaborative, collective and individual activities
- Plan for a range of groupings and allow for an inclusive classroom
- Encourage and set high standards of presentation and achievement

Effective learning

What is effective learning?

Successful learning has been identified as:

- Sustained/retained - lifelong, encouraging further learning
- Learning which can be applied - is cross curricular and ensures a transference of skills beyond the classroom
- Incorporating independent thinking and problem solving
- Learning which takes place via a variety of methods - in response to a variety of stimuli, concrete, abstract kinaesthetic
- Enjoyed learning which encourages children to extend their own thinking
- Motivated to fulfil potential
- Relevant to the child's world and that of society as a whole –
- Learning which allows pupils to work cooperatively in order to develop social skills
- Learning which incorporates values
- Learning which encourages pupils to ask, 'What if...?'
- Learning which reflects, and makes use of, our digital age
- Learning which develops a child's ability to express and explain
- Learning which nurtures confidence
- Learning which encourages creativity of thought and action, making mistakes from which to learn and build and develop concrete and abstract

Improving learning and teaching

Learning and teaching requires continuous work and commitment from school staff to refine, modify and improve activities and techniques.

Every year all teaching staff:

- Undertake a minimum of 35 hours' continuous professional development (CPD) on a pro-rata basis
- Meet with the Depute or Head Teacher to discuss CPD work undertaken
- Take part in a broad audit of the school which includes a section on learning and teaching
- Participate in activities agreed through Working Time Agreement, to undertake whole school developments aimed at improving aspects of school, including learning and teaching processes
- Self-evaluate an agreed focus of learning and teaching as part of their termly planning
- Participate in peer classroom observations and provide effective feedback and professional dialogue
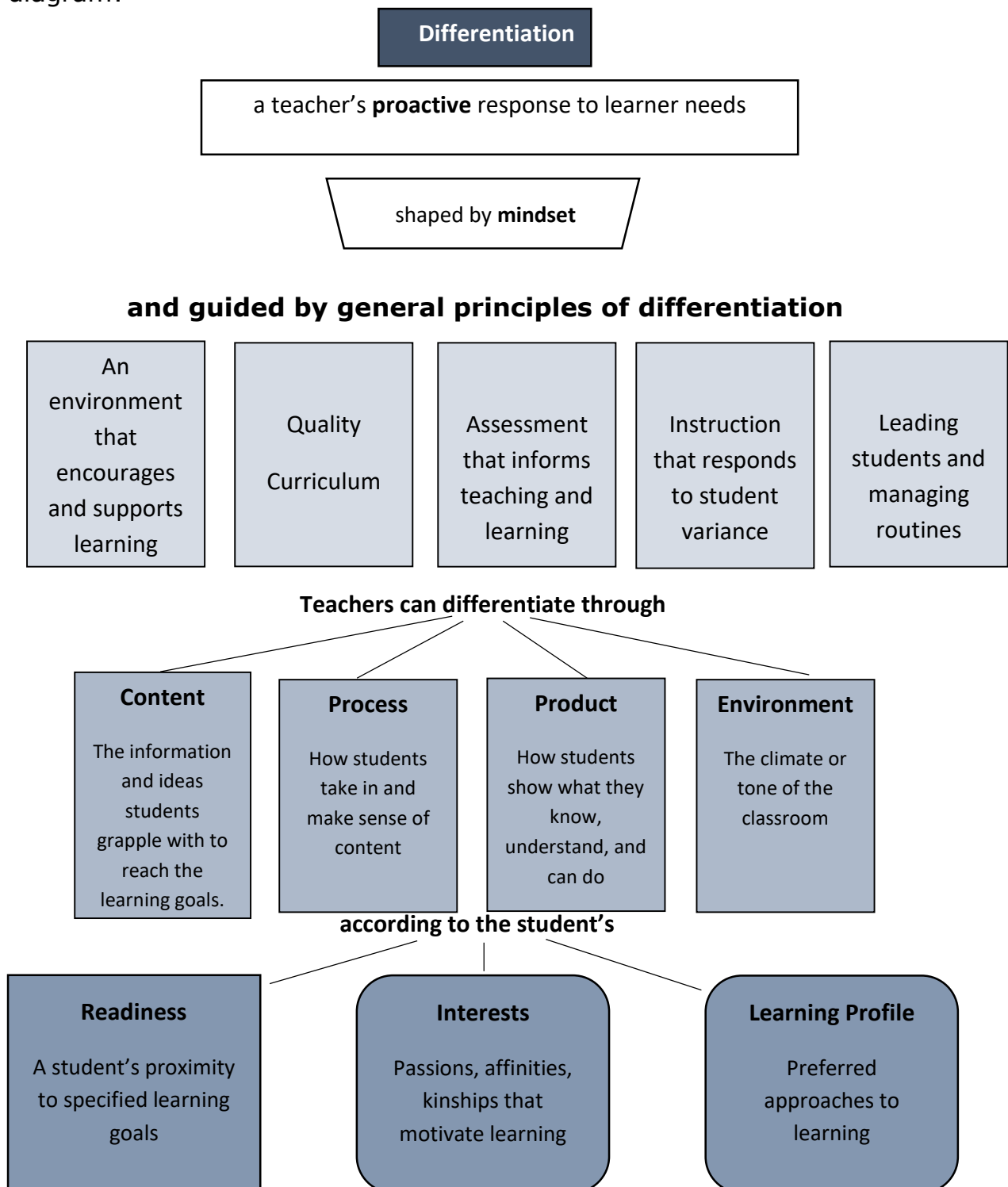
- Receive feedback about their teaching practice through formal class visits from the Depute or Head Teacher
- Provide and seek informal advice and support from other teachers to improve the quality of learning experiences for their children
- Ensure progression between classes, stages and establishments through effective transitional dialogue and documentation
- Develop their awareness and knowledge of new and current local and national initiatives aimed at improving learning and teaching in schools
- Ensure learning builds on prior knowledge and attainment pupils must be involved in the planning process-identifying key questions and areas for investigation
- During periods of learning, pupils should be encouraged to reflect on the learning intention and success criteria and improve their work accordingly
- Pupils should be given opportunities to evaluate their own work and take responsibility for making improvements
- Pupils should be given an element of personalisation and choice in tasks where appropriate
- Effective methods are used for responding to individual pupil enquiries/problem
- Pupils should have opportunities to articulate their learning with peers, adults and a wider audience through a variety of expressive arts and medium
- Learning partners should be used effectively to support understanding and encourage all children to contribute
- A variety of groupings is used - social, ability, mixed ability, friendship
- Expository, discursive, enquiry and activity styles of teaching are used appropriately throughout the school
- Pupils are supported during periods of learning to evaluate progress and make improvements with reference to success criteria and by using technology as appropriate
- Direct interactive teaching with individuals, groups and whole class takes place appropriately
- Clear and relevant introductions to lessons are given
- In planning, periods of learning time are included for a plenary to reflect on what has been learned
- Teaching focuses on the potential rather that the limits of pupils
- Differentiation is understood and used appropriately
- Pupils are actively involved in a range of appropriate first-hand experiences as appropriate
- Open-ended tasks are set to encourage risk-taking, exploration and creative thinking
- Set tasks are achievable but challenging
- Thinking skills and problem-solving strategies are developed and encouraged

- Effective questioning that challenges and supports genuine dialogue to encourage reflection, speculation and use of problem-solving strategies to aid understanding

Differentiation

Differentiated approaches to learning and teaching are implemented throughout the curriculum to allow diverse groups of students, with diverse learning needs, to achieve success.

The process of differentiated instruction is shown in the following diagram:

Differentiation

a teacher's **proactive** response to learner needs

shaped by **mindset**

and guided by general principles of differentiation

An environment that encourages and supports learning	Quality Curriculum	Assessment that informs teaching and learning	Instruction that responds to student variance	Leading students and managing routines

Teachers can differentiate through

Content	**Process**	**Product**	**Environment**
The information and ideas students grapple with to reach the learning goals.	How students take in and make sense of content	How students show what they know, understand, and can do	The climate or tone of the classroom

according to the student's

Readiness	**Interests**	**Learning Profile**
A student's proximity to specified learning goals	Passions, affinities, kinships that motivate learning	Preferred approaches to learning

Through a variety of instructional strategies, such as

Learning/interest Centres - RAFTS - Graphic Organizers - Scaffolded Reading/Writing

Intelligence Preferences - Tiered Assignments - Learning Contracts - Menus - Tic-Tac-Toe

Complex Instruction - Independent Projects - Expression Options - Small-Group Instruction

There are four main ways in which differentiation is provided:

- Content
- Process
- Product
- Environment

The following table, taken from The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of All Learners (2014) by Carol Ann Tomlinson, demonstrates the key qualities of a 'Differentiated Classroom':

The Differentiated Classroom
Student differences are valued and studied as basis for planning.
Assessment is ongoing and diagnostic to understand how to make instruction more responsive to learners needs.
Focus on a range of intelligences is evident.
The teacher believes all students have the capacity to succeed and supports that belief through 'teaching up' and differentiated instructional plans.
Excellence is defined in terms of both individual growth and recognized norms.
Students are frequently guided and supported in making interest-based choices.
Many approaches to teaching and learning are consistently evident.
Many instructional groupings are used.
Student readiness, interest, and approach to learning guide instructional plans.
Use of essential knowledge and essential skills to achieve or extend essential understandings is the focus of learning.
Multi-option assignments are common.
Time is used flexibly and in accordance with student needs.
Multiple materials and other resources are provided.
Multiple perspectives on ideas, issues, and events are routinely sought.
The teacher facilitates development of student skills of self-reliance and collaboration.
Students help other students and the teacher solve problems.
Students are assessed in multiple ways and in multiple modes.
The grading process reflects student performance, work processes, and growth.

Creative Thinking

Using our imagination and knowledge, we learn to explore new possibilities rather than established norms. Embedding opportunities to be more creative in our learning allows us to examine problems in a new light and with an open mind. Promoting creativity improves self-esteem, motivation and achievement of learners. It also engages them in their learning. By encouraging learners to take ownership of their learning, it helps develop problem solving skills. Promoting creative learning opens up opportunities to work with others, leading to effective contributors and successful learners.

Pupils who are encouraged to think creatively:

- Become more interested in discovering for themselves
- Are more open to new ideas and challenges
- Are more able to solve problems
- Can work well with others
- Become more effective learners
- Have greater ownership over their learning

Focus on Outdoor Learning

Outdoor Learning has many advantages including the opportunity to explore and discover, and allow for planned and managed "risk taking" to take place. Mentally, physically and emotionally the outdoors is a very different place from the classroom. Planned opportunities for Outdoor Learning and Learning Outdoors take place in a number of different contexts including using the school grounds for both the formal curriculum (e.g. taking maths outdoors) and the more vocational or extra - curricular learning such as developing a school garden or using the local environment. The Cairnhill woods have been risk assessed and are widely used by all stages to enhance learning across the curriculum.

Talking and Questioning

Talking is central to learning. All lessons include planned and unplanned opportunities to discuss questions and extend thinking. '*Think/Pair/Share'* talking to a partner are regular features in all lessons. Through the provision of regular opportunities for talking about learning, pupils come to understand that their talk is valued as much as their written work.

It is adults who help make sense of information. The frequency and nature of interactions between teacher and pupils is highly significant.

Questioning helps develop understanding by:

- Using open-ended questions.
- Providing wait time - pupils need time to think through their answers before replying.
- Providing thinking time by giving an advance warning, such as '*In two minutes I am going to ask you...'*
- Allowing pupils to explore and articulate their thinking by giving them time to discuss their responses in pairs or groups. Pupils then respond with '*We think that...'*
- Ensuring pupils fully understand the question.

Higher Order Thinking (HOT) Skills

The importance of the development of HOT within CfE is illustrated in a recent report to the Cabinet Secretary by the Higher Order Skills Excellence Group, 2011.

"An emphasis on higher order skills is [thus] integral to Curriculum for Excellence. It is an inescapable consequence of the social and economic realities of the twenty-first century; the need to evaluate increasingly complex issues, the ability to compete on creativity and quality rather than scale and cost, the capacity to anticipate the 'next big thing', and the agility to respond quickly and effectively." (High Order Skills Excellence Group report to the Cabinet Secretary, March 2011)

Bloom's (revised) Taxonomy of High and Low Order thinking Skills illustrates the different types of activity which are involved at each level of skill.

CREATING	Designing, Constructing, Planning, Producing, Inventing, Making, Building

Higher Order Thinking Skills

EVALUATION	Checking, Hypothesising Critiquing, Experimenting, Judging, Testing, Detecting

ANALYSING	Comparing, Organising, Deconstructing, Attributing, Outlining, Structuring

APPLYING	Implementing, Carrying out, Using, Executing

UNDERSTANDING	Interpreting, Exemplifying, Summarising, Inferring, Paraphrasing, Classifying, Comparing, Explaining

Lower Order Thinking Skills

REMEMBERING	Recognising, listening, Describing, identifying, Retrieving, Naming, Recitation, Locating/Finding

Active and Collaborative Learning

We set out to ensure young people take an active and collaborative approach to their learning and can demonstrate their understanding in various ways. These include:

Active learning where learners have:	Collaborative learning where learners have:	Demonstrating learning by understanding by:
been involved	worked in a team	Explaining and
listened to others	shared ideas	answering
taken responsibility	contributed	Writing
explained to others	taken turns	Presenting
worked things out	shown respect	Discussing
		Making

Active Learning

Active learning engages and challenges learners' thinking using real life and imaginary situations and is promoted across all areas of the curriculum at all stages. Active Learning can support learners' development of the four capacities.

- **Successful learners** through using their imagination and creativity, tackling new experiences and learning from them, and developing important skills including literacy and numeracy through exploring and investigating while following their own interests

- **Confident individuals** through succeeding in their activities, having the satisfaction of a task accomplished, learning about bouncing back from setbacks, and dealing safely with risk

- **Responsible citizens** through encountering different ways of seeing the world, learning to share and give and take, learning to respect themselves and others, and taking part in making decisions

- **Effective contributors** through interacting together in leading or supporting roles, tackling problems, extending communication skills, taking part in sustained talking and thinking, and respecting the opinions of others

Digital Learning

As is stated in Scotland's digital learning and teaching strategy, *Enhancing learning and teaching through the use of digital technology* (2016), 'it is both logical and desirable that an increased and more effective use of digital technology will result in all of Scotland's learners developing a level of digital skills that will be essential in today's increasingly digitised world'.

The use of technology is continually increasing and developing in all areas of society. This trend will only continue as our pupils' progress through their school careers and enter the workforce. In order to successfully prepare children for life, earning and work, it is vital that we ensure they are equipped with the necessary skills to succeed in the modern world.

Inclusion

We believe an inclusive school is one in which the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and wellbeing of every pupil matters. This will not only show in the performance of each child but also in the school ethos and our willingness to consider the varied life experiences and needs of each pupil.

We aim to:
- Maintain an ethos of inclusion and celebrate educational diversity
- Meet the needs of any pupils for whom English is an additional language
- Seek ways to support all children and their families
- Meet the needs of pupils with ASN (Additional Support Needs)

Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is a successful teaching strategy in which small teams, each with pupils of varying abilities, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject. A co-operative learning activity consists of the following five elements:

Social Skills

Skills that enable groups to function effectively - taking turns, encouraging, listening, giving help, clarifying, checking understanding, probing. Such skills enhance trust, communication, leadership, and decision-making.

Positive interdependence

When all members feel connected to each other in the accomplishment of a goal. All individuals must succeed to the group can succeed.

Individual Accountability

Holding every group member responsible to demonstrate the success of the learning.

Group Processing

When group members assess their collaborative efforts (related to social skills) target improvements.

Face-to-face interaction

When all group members are close in proximity to each other and dialogue with each other in ways that promote continued progress.

Learning across the Curriculum

Learning across the curriculum is the responsibility of all in the context of Health and Wellbeing, Literacy and Numeracy. This coupled with the specific themes of learning for sustainability, global citizenship, enterprise in education and financial education will give our children and young people opportunities to learn about their world and how to be active participants. Through well-planned curricular contexts which underpin the design of the curriculum in Westerton Primary.

Planning

We continually review and develop our planning processes. Planning is structured in the following ways:

Long term planning

Programmes of work are in place in some curriculum areas and under construction in others. These provide a foundation for teachers to use as a tool, but appropriate adaptations are made by teachers to meet the needs of individuals and groups of children to include relevant activities to enhance the learning experiences of the children in their class.
Yearly overviews give an indication of curriculum coverage within a class.

Short term planning

Teachers currently use a combination of daily and weekly plans which include:
- The learning intention for each lesson
- The activities which will take place including, *if relevant:* differentiation; resources; key vocabulary or questions to be shared and a plenary
- Next steps and notes which inform and help structure future planning

Whilst careful planning is important, staff at Westerton Primary recognise the importance of flexibility to allow for spontaneity, engaging with pupils' interests and/or altering plans according to need.

Assessment is for Learning

Staff are committed to using a variety of Assessment is for Learning strategies (AiFL) to engage our learners.

- Learning intentions and success criteria are visible
- Classroom discussion, questioning and tasks promote and generate learning
- Timely feedback helps to move learners forward
- Ownership of learning is evident
- Self and peer assessment to increase learner responsibility and a better understanding of expectations
- Use of plenary to capture the intended learning and evaluate success

Assessment

All staff must be familiar with the advice available in recent publications with regard to assessment. Building the Curriculum 5 is of particular significance. The Principles and Practice documents in each of the eight areas give advice on assessment in each curricular area. The Education Scotland website is also a source of valuable information and examples of good practice in assessment.

Quality Assurance and Self Evaluation

To ensure learning and teaching is effective, consistent and current across our school we have developed a robust and supportive self-evaluation process to regularly review how we are doing, how do we know and where are we going to next.

CFE Level Planning

In line with the East Dunbartonshire Council Self Evaluation Policy and the school's Self Evaluation approaches, all stages undertake core self-evaluation tasks. These include classroom observations, sharing good practice, moderation activities, monitoring and tracking, learning walks, peer observations and professional dialogue.

Whole School

The Whole School Self Evaluation Calendar and the East Dunbartonshire Council Self Evaluation Policy highlight the core self-evaluation activities within the school. These include classroom observations by senior leaders, learning walks, whole school workshops, whole school working parties and peer observations of classroom practice.

Continuous Professional Learning Programme

Our Continuous Professional Learning Programme provides support for staff in implementing effective learning and teaching and helps to ensure staff have learning opportunities to enhance practice and knowledge for the benefit of our learners and whole school community.

Pupil Voice

Pupil Voice is a fundamental part of our school community. Our approaches to self-evaluation with pupils include annual questionnaires, regular pupil focus groups, school improvement discussions with Pupil Council, learning and teaching workshops. Pupils are encouraged to lead on key aspects of school life through the wider achievement programme, the assembly programme, pupil clubs and after school activities.

Parent Council

Our strong partnership with our parent representative body allows us to work collaboratively to ensure high quality learning and teaching. Through self-evaluation exercises such as questionnaires, workshops, focus groups, School Improvement reports, and ongoing monthly discussion around areas of strength and areas of development, we ensure parents have ownership on the decisions made and the direction of the school.

Play to Learn: The Importance of Play and Outdoor Learning

We recognise and appreciate the value of play in allowing children to develop and make meaning of their learning. Play provides children with the time to make sense of their thoughts and learning, to experiment and challenge themselves further, and provides open-ended opportunities for children to demonstrate progress while maintaining motivation and enthusiasm for learning.

The impact of play-based learning gives all children the opportunities to:

- Be more actively engaged in their learning
- Explore/experiment with new learning and challenge themselves without pressure
- Develop important social skills through shared learning experiences
- Become confident, resilient and reflective learners
- Demonstrate teamwork and problem- solving skills
- Develop gross motor control and fine motor skills in a more organic way
- Learn from each other
- Consolidate and secure skills in a comfortable, unpressured environment

This also includes play in the outdoors which we aim to do on at least a weekly basis. The outdoors encourages children to view the world around them in a more meaningful way and apply their learning in different, and often more meaningful, contexts.

Play also allows for valuable teacher observation that can be built into planning. Observation provides opportunities for teachers to reflect on the children's experiences and learning, allowing us to implement effective responsive planning opportunities.

Pupil Enquiry-Based Learning (PEBL)

'Play to Learn' develops through enquiry-based learning in the upper stages. PEBL is an approach to learning that emphasises the child's role in the learning process. Rather than the teacher telling pupils what they need to know, they are encouraged to explore the material, ask questions, and share ideas.

We recognise and appreciate that this approach to learning and teaching develops a range of qualities and skills in our learners that will serve them as they enter higher education and working life. These skills include:

- Leadership
- Organisation and time-management
- Critical and creative thinking
- Compromise and negotiation
- Researching
- Questioning
- Communication
- Problem-solving