

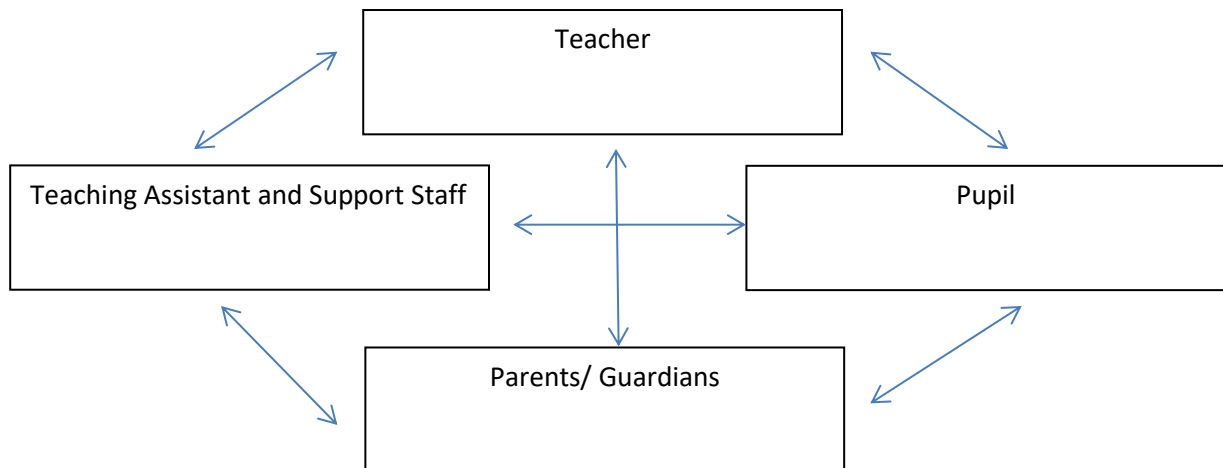


## Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy

Life at Beech Hill School is underpinned by our belief that human potential is not predictable and that children's futures are unknowable. We firmly believe that children don't fit into a predefined group and therefore focus on learning rather than attainment. We have a deep belief in the learning capacity of everyone in school and that teaching, learning and assessment is not purely the responsibility of the class teacher but that of the Teaching Team.

At Beech Hill School the word 'can't' in terms of learning doesn't exist. Children just simply 'can't yet' and it is the job of the teaching team to ensure that all children 'can'.

### The Beech Hill School Teaching Team:



### Planning:

At Beech Hill everyone contributes to the planning of lessons to create a learning journey. All planning is based on effective formative assessment and enables children the time to master skills and to experience challenge at an appropriate level. It is not expected that planning take any particular format or that it is handed in. Where staff are sharing the planning load across a team,

that planning should be in more detail so that people are clear on what they are teaching. Furthermore, where planning is shared, it is an expectation that it is available to all members of the team before the weekend along with any resources to allow each teacher to adapt what is planned to the needs of their class.

All children work towards the National Curriculum expectations for their age (within reason) but it is recognised that for some children the journey to meeting these objectives will be longer. Where children have gaps in their learning, this is taken into account in planning and where needed catch-up sessions are provided outside of learning time. For those children who are working well within their age related expectations, their learning is deepened through using and applying activities.

### **Our Curriculum:**

At Beech Hill we strive to provide a tailor made thematic creative curriculum that engages and inspires our children whilst ensuring National Curriculum coverage. We firmly believe that our curriculum should reflect our diverse and ever changing cohort and provide opportunities to learn about their own heritage alongside developing their understanding of other cultures and religions.

Our curriculum is divided into six whole school themes entitled: Near and Far (Geography focus), Long Ago (History focus), Mad Scientists (Science focus), Fantasy World (The Arts focus), Keen to be Green (Environment focus) and Dare to Dream (a chance for teachers to choose any topic based on their own interests and the interests of the class).

Within each of these themes, each year group studies their own topic which ensures progression throughout the school. Underpinning the entire curriculum are the basic skills of English, Mathematics and Computing. The children at our school are given every opportunity to use and apply their skills in these areas when studying a theme.

Planned into each of the six themes covered by our children throughout the year are Excellence and Enjoyment Days- either a trip or in school workshop

devised to extend and inspire the children's learning and widen their experiences. This in turn impacts on their ability to write. In order to promote citizenship and PSHE throughout the school, each year group has a series of texts to share a class that promote discussions around key issues.

What's more, we plan two Design Technology themed weeks throughout the year to teach our children the appropriate National Curriculum skills and knowledge. This allows children to build up a repertoire of skills on a daily basis within a project/'problem to be solved' that they can complete and evaluate. This is a valuable learning journey in which a progression of skills can be seen across the school.

At the end of each half term, children are assessed against the National Curriculum standards in the subject focus area. Children are assessed as 'Beginning', 'Working Within' or 'Secure' against the objectives. To help teachers with this judgment, they provide children with a final assessment task (children decide which activities they would like to complete throughout the unit to ensure they have ownership of their learning. Some children even choose the means by which they show their understanding of the topic for the final assessment task). Each topic has up to ten 'must knows' that the children will be assessed against not only at the end of the topic, but throughout the year and beyond. Key vocabulary is also noted on the long term curriculum plan and it is an expectation that all children will be specifically taught these words.

To ensure positive behaviour and effective learning throughout the school, we incorporate our core values into our curriculum. We believe that the social and emotional aspects of learning should be a key focus for our work with the children and understand that the factors that can hold back the learning of our children include children's difficulties in understanding and managing their feelings, working co-operatively in groups, motivating themselves and demonstrating resilience in the face of setbacks. Through the combined use of the 'values approach', our Rights Respecting School status and our creative curriculum, we are able to create children who are effective learners who appreciate their 'right to an education' (Article 28). When our children leave school at the end of Year Six we strive for them to be well rounded individuals who have the necessary English and Maths skills to succeed in life whilst having experienced an inspiring curriculum which gives them every chance to succeed.

## Recording of Learning:

Across the curriculum our children have their own Learning Journey books (Maths, English, Topic and Science). In addition to this, every class has a Design Technology and RE class Learning Journey book. The children take pride in all work that they produce ensuring high standards of presentation. In the topic learning journeys, children in Year 4 upwards are given the choice in how they present their work.

| WHOLE SCHOOL THEME<br>(including a focus on influential women): | <u>Near and Far</u><br>(geography focus)<br>Richard | <u>Long Ago</u><br>(history focus)<br>Emma | <u>Mad Scientists</u><br>(science focus)<br>Natalija | <u>Fantasy World</u><br>(the arts focus)<br>Laura B | <u>Keen to be Green</u><br>(Environmental focus)<br>Richard | <u>Dare to Dream - an exciting project for each year group</u><br>Sara |
|---|---|--|--|---|---|--|
| Nursery   | Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes                    | Susie Had a Baby                           | Old McDonald Had a Farm                              | Walking Through the Jungle                          | Pizza Hut   | The Wheels on the Bus  |
| Reception<br>(extension projects)                               | The Good, the Bad and the Ugly                      | Heroes and Helpers                         | Bugs, Beasties and Birds                             | Animal Facts  | Bob the Builder   | Let's Go   |
| Year 1  | Paddington  | Toy Story                                  | Lazy Town  | Dragons and Castles                                 | Food Glorious Food  | All Creatures Great and Small  |
| Year 2  | Sun, Sea and Sand                                   | Fire Fire                                  | Circle of Life                                       | Swashbuckle (Pirates)                               | Green Fingers   | The Giant Jam Sandwich   |
| Year 3  | Great Britain and The Romans                        | Anglo-Saxons and Scots                     | Mad Science  | Dinosaurs   | Is Climate Cool?  | American Adventures with Flat Stanley                                  |
| Year 4  | Around Brazil in 30 days                            | Ancient Egypt                              | Antarctic Adventure                                  | Time Travellers - Stone Age/ Iron Age               | Eco Warriors  | Through the Wardrobe   |
| Year 5  | Home in a Biome                                     | Mayans                                     | To Infinity...and Beyond!                            | Groovy Greeks                                       | Wet and Wild  | Behind the Scenes  |

|        |             |                      |                             |                                 |                                  |                    |
|--------|-------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Year 6 | On the Move | Crime and Punishment | Scientists Through the Ages | If We Could Talk to the Animals | Planet Earth: Nature Documentary | The Great Outdoors |
|--------|-------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|

### **Formative Assessment:**

**Marking and feedback-** The focus of our assessments will usually be a National Curriculum criteria, mastery statement or key performance indicator.

Lessons are planned with a clear learning objective. We base these upon the teacher's detailed knowledge of each child. The learning objective is shared with the children. This will be written as a 'can you' statement. The child's ability to complete the piece of work and fulfil the learning objective will be determined by the teacher and marked accordingly.

Feedback is provided, written or verbally, to children through marking so that they have specific next steps about how to improve their work. Children are given time to read and review their work following marking. Children are encouraged to use a pink pen to respond to teachers' comments.

Self-assessment - children are encouraged to assess their own learning within lessons, reflecting informally on what they have learnt and what they still need to learn. They also, where appropriate, assess each other's work.

Pupil Learning Reviews- The children in Year 6 carryout a termly 'Learning Review Meeting' with all members of the Teaching Team. The children reflect on their learning, their areas of development and how the other members of the teaching team can support their learning further.

Element of Choice- At Beech Hill we aim to increase our children's ownership of their own learning by giving them choice where appropriate. At times, children are given the choice of the learning task that they complete, the choice of the level of support that they want and also input to the planning of curriculum topics through suggesting learning tasks that they would like to see included. These are displayed on every classroom wall on the Learning Tree.

Seesaw- our online learning platform is also used as a means of assessing the children's understanding and for them to assess each other.

## **Summative Assessment:**

### **In Year Assessment:**

Across the year teachers will use formative assessment to make judgements about how well a child is doing toward the National Curriculum expectations for their year group and catch up sessions/ interventions put in place where needed.

In maths, children carry out end of unit assessment to support teacher assessment. They also answer questions from the NCETM mastery documents. Children also have regular times table tests. At the end of the fifth half term, all children will take a final summative assessment. These assessments provide an overview of where the children still have gaps in their learning and this information is used to plan the final half term's work and used in transition to the next class and teacher.

In reading, children carry out regular Accelerated Reader quizzes to check their comprehension of the books that they are reading at home. In addition to this, they have a weekly guided comprehension session with their class teacher where teacher assessment judgements can be made. On a termly basis, children in year 2 upwards take a Star Reader test to monitor progress. At the end of the fifth half term, all children will take a final summative assessment. These assessments provide an overview of where the children still have gaps in their learning and this information is used to plan the final half term's work and used in transition to the next class and teacher.

In writing, children's work is assessed across the year based on a sample independent writing across the curriculum. Termly moderation takes place to ensure a consistency of approach alongside external moderation. The school has created its own year group expectations for writing based on the national curriculum standards.

For GPS, children take weekly spelling tests. It is expected that grammar is not taught solely in isolation and that children are encouraged to use and apply their knowledge and skills to their writing.

At the end of the year the above information will be used to say whether a child is securely working at their age band or not. In years 1, 3, 4 and 5 commercially bought tests plus teacher assessment will be used to make the judgement.

National Tests-In Years 2 and 6 the national SATs test will be the basis of this judgement alongside teacher assessment for writing. A judgement about a child's phonetical awareness will also be made from the results of the Year 1 phonics screening.

### **Learning at Home:**

Any homework that is set is an extension of learning and is used for assessment. Homework is marked and children are given feedback on how they have done. On a weekly basis, children are given a piece of maths homework and spellings to learn as well as their nightly reading. A Homework club is provided when children are unable to complete their homework at home. Regular parents' meetings are held to support parents in helping their child at home.

Over a school holiday, Learning log (project based) homework is set. Children and their parents/carers are actively encouraged to work together on these. Every class holds a gallery walk to celebrate the work that has been produced and a vote taken within the class to decide who should be given a certificate in Gold Book.

Seesaw: this is our online learning platform and provides an excellent link between home and school. Children's work is frequently shared on Seesaw for parents to see and teachers often post additional home-based learning tasks to extend our children's learning.

### **Teaching Assistants at Beech Hill:**

At Beech Hill school we value highly the work of our additional adults and recognise the valuable contributions that they make towards pupil progress as part of the teaching team.

Our Teaching Assistants:

- Are involved in a weekly planning meeting with their team to discuss the lessons for that week.

- Provide regular feedback to the class teacher about the progress of children that they have worked with.
- Provide feedback to the children on their progress.
- Mark the work for the group that they have been working with when appropriate. (Purple Pen Comments)
- Reinforce the teacher's instructions
- Support the behaviour management of the class within all lessons.
- Work with the range of children across the class.
- Ask questions to the whole class when appropriate,
- Encourage learners to take responsibility for their own learning even when working closely with them.
- Team-teach with the teacher at times.
- Make observations during whole class teaching of children's responses and progress (post-it note records).
- Introduce the lesson starters at times.
- Deliver bespoke interventions.
- Support the whole school ethos of taking care of our environment.
- Check reading logs alongside the class teacher.
- Are not always assigned to a specific group within a lesson.
- Interact with the teacher throughout the lesson (rapport).

In addition to this all of our support staff are involved in:

- Regular training based on their identified needs and the school's priorities
- Peer lesson observations/ staff swap
- Performance management
- Contributing their skills to out of school clubs



### **Learning from each other:**

As part of our learning community we encourage a climate where everyone learns from each other. The children support each other through peer support both in lessons and in whole school initiatives such as Reading Leaders.

As a staff we aim to constantly improve teaching and learning through peer observations. We have successfully created a climate of trust where teachers and support staff are comfortable with other people in their lessons and everyone recognises the importance of learning from each other. Termly class swaps take place across the classroom workforce to develop skills and knowledge of the whole school and its curriculum.

A whole school CPD log is kept to monitor the external courses that members of staff are attending and the impact that they will have on the wider school. This log links directly to our school improvement priorities.

Directed time is planned based on areas identified in the SDP and learning needs that staff themselves have identified through their performance management. In addition to this, NQTS receive a bespoke package of training based on their end of final placement targets and induction discussions with their mentor.

### **The Monitoring of Teaching and Learning**

At Beech Hill our judgement of Teaching and Learning is formulated through a clear picture of what is typical across our school. Every term each class is observed a least twice in the same subject area to look at progress across time, the books are then scrutinised and pupil interviews take place. To support our judgements further, regular drop-ins by members of the senior leadership take place along with large scale scrutinies of pupils' learning journeys across all subjects by middle and senior manager and external agencies. Senior staff also cover classes across the year to gain clear picture of what is happening within every class across the school.

As we believe that it is important for our children to have a voice in all elements of school development, we train our children to be 'Mini Inspectors'. During a mini inspection, the children will drop into lessons, interview pupils and staff and

observe assemblies, playtime and lunchtimes. They then write a report which they present to the senior leadership team.

**What would you see if you visited a class at Beech Hill?**

**(Created by staff December 2015)**

- All children engaged in learning
- Collaborative learning (Learning Partners)
- Excellent behaviour for learning
- Creative learning opportunities
- Differentiated questioning
- Rewards and praise
- Working walls- to further support learning and used as a learning tool
- Children taking pride in their work and handwriting is cursive
- Effectively deployed support staff
- Excellent manners from both the children and staff
- Vocabulary rich environment
- ICT used to support learning where appropriate including Seesaw
- Children leading learning
- Cross-curricular links
- Evidence of their class country
- Purposeful classroom layout
- Enthusiastic and happy children
- Children's achievements celebrated
- Independence
- Consistency

This document is to be used by all new members of staff for induction, current members of staff as an aid memoir, SLT when carrying out drop-ins and typicality observations and governors to ensure they know what teaching and learning should look like at Beech Hill. It will also be used when appointing new members of staff to ensure that they share our same ethos for education.