

Teaching and Learning

Beech Hill School



Approved by: Sara Cockroft

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Introduction

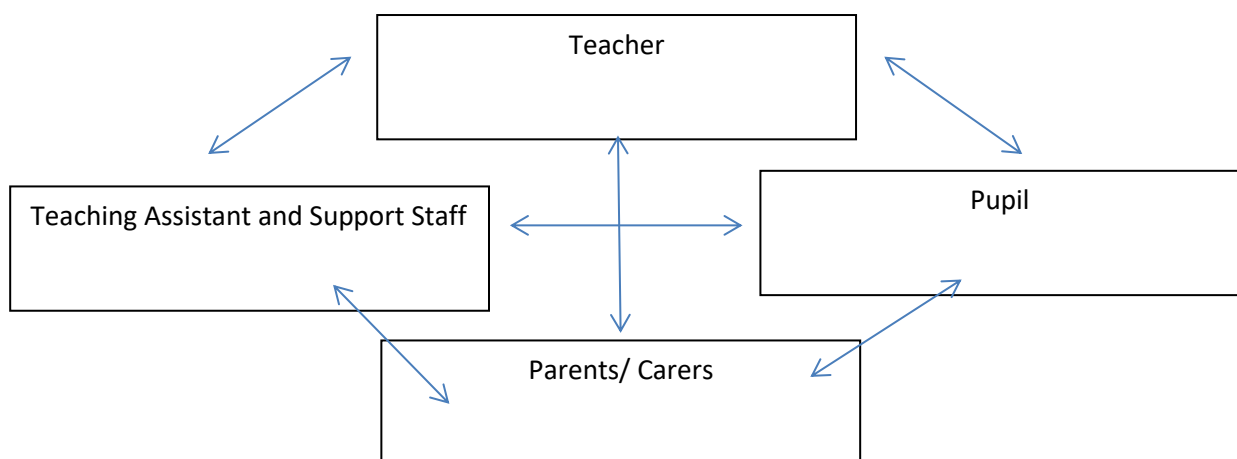
At Beech Hill, we believe that every child matters. There is a driving determination to ensure that pupils and adults in our school reach their full potential. Our Trust ethos is a simple one: 'Learning without Limits'. We are passionate about making a difference to the lives of all our children. We want our school to be the best that it can be and for each child to discover the skills, abilities, talents and interests that lie within them.

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. When our children leave school at the end of year six, we strive for them to be well-rounded individuals who have the necessary literacy and numeracy skills to succeed in life whilst having experienced an inspiring curriculum which gives them every chance to succeed.

Professional Development and Staff Training

As a staff, we aim to constantly improve teaching and learning. We have a deep belief in the learning capacity of everyone in school that teaching and learning are not only the responsibility of the teachers but the whole teaching team. We are all responsible for providing a caring, stimulating learning environment in which all children are helped to reach their emotional and academic potential.

The Beech Hill School Teaching Team:



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. We sometimes use class swaps across the classroom workforce and the Trust to develop skills and knowledge of the whole school and its curriculum. Iris Connect is effectively used to share good practice across the school and trust. Staff are encouraged to record parts of their lessons which they can then share with others. We are a research informed school and use research and evidence to improve our practice.

Weekly training sessions are planned for teachers based on the school priorities. In addition, staff are encouraged to continuously develop professionally in order to improve their subject knowledge and practice. Staff keep their own logs of any training attended and CPD is disseminated where necessary with impact measured by senior leaders. All staff have access to The National College CPD Hub, including support staff. Regular support staff training is delivered by subject leaders to ensure they are equipped with the skills to support 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 do the following:

- Are involved in regular planning meetings with their team/class teacher to discuss the lessons throughout the 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.

Planning

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 to them. Each subject has a long-term and medium-term plan. Where staff are sharing the planning load across a team (for example the year group team within the Trust), that planning should be in more detail, in the form of a weekly plan 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 in year groups one to six 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 lesson time. For those children who are working well within their age-related expectations, their learning is deepened through using and applying and mastery activities.

Planning ensures that the needs of individuals and small groups of children can be met within the environment of high, quality first wave teaching and 'Teaching to the Top'. Teaching to the top ensures we never put a ceiling on a child's learning so that they are able to maximise the opportunity to achieve their full potential whatever their ability and to impact in a positive way on pupil outcomes.

Our Curriculum

At Beech Hill we strive to provide a tailor made, thematic curriculum that engages and inspires our children, providing them with rich and memorable experiences alongside lifelong knowledge and skills. We firmly believe that our curriculum should reflect our diverse and ever-changing community and provide them with opportunities to learn about their own heritage alongside developing their understanding of other cultures and religions. We provide wider opportunities for children to develop as independent, confident, successful learners with high aspirations who know how to make a positive contribution to their community and the wider society. There is a high focus on developing children's moral, spiritual, social and cultural understanding as well as basic skills. The school ensures that children are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Our curriculum for years one to six is based on the National Curriculum and, for Nursery and Reception, the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Our curriculum is designed to ensure coverage and progression. Lessons are based around our bespoke progression documents for each subject, which has been created by our own staff, and knowledge and vocabulary are broken down in the form of 'must-knows' for each year group to ensure children retain key knowledge. Subjects are mapped out in long-term plans to accommodate progression across the school. More information on these subjects and the way they are taught can be found on our website in the curriculum section.

High quality visits and visitors into the school enhance the curriculum and provide opportunities for writing for a purpose. The Arts play a key role in giving every child at our school a vital channel for self-expression. Our children work with three Artists in Residence for art and design, dance and poetry. Years one to six have the opportunity to work with all three for one half term per year. Our extensive grounds and forest school provide a wealth of opportunities for children to discover, explore and extend their natural talents. Here children learn first-hand about the riches of the natural environment whilst developing important life skills such as team work, problem solving and resilience. To promote physical health and wellbeing, a range of clubs gives learners an opportunity to access a wide variety of sports clubs after school hours and during lunch times.

Online Learning Platform

Seesaw 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.

Focus Weeks/Days

Throughout the year, we hold a series of focus days or weeks; these range from specific curriculum areas, eg. DT week, to health or community-based events such as STEM week. The aim of this approach is to raise the profile and enthusiasm for an area and to provide children with the opportunity to practise their skills and develop interest.

Parents

Establishing close links between home and school is key to enabling pupils to achieve their full potential. Therefore, the half termly curriculum overview along with the must knows is sent out via our Seesaw App and is available on the school's website for parents to access. Seesaw provides a window to classroom learning for parents and for allowing parents to share their child's learning at home.

Values

To ensure effective learning throughout the school, we incorporate our core values into our curriculum: honesty, tolerance, respect, determination, perseverance, appreciation, friendship and kindness. 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 ethos and our creative curriculum, we are able to create children who are effective learners.

Learning Styles

We recognise that children learn in different ways and therefore plan and deliver a multi-sensory, differentiated approach to engage all learners using visual, auditory and kinaesthetic stimuli. A wide range of resources including interactive whiteboards, ipads and talking tubs (containing specific items linked to a topic) are available to support learning. We recognise multiple intelligences and differing learning styles by providing a range of opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their understanding and, throughout the day, pupils will engage in whole-class work, group work, paired work and independent work.

Support

Additional support is provided to identified children so they can access the curriculum and fulfil their potential. This includes pupils with special educational needs and pupils who are 'New to English' or to extend the high ability pupils.

Recording of Learning

Across the curriculum our children have their own Learning Journey books (Maths, English, Curriculum, Science, Religious Education, French and Art sketchbooks). In addition to this, every class has a Design Technology and Computing class floor book which contains the work they have produced in those subjects, starting from EYFS, right up until they leave in Year 6. The children take pride in all work that they produce ensuring high standards of presentation. We also record work from all areas of the curriculum on Seesaw and this provides an extension to each child's Learning Journey as well as informing parents/carers of what the children are learning so they can support at home.

Assessment

Assessment lies at the heart of learning and should be incorporated systematically into the every day teaching to inform future planning. The focus of our assessments will usually be National Curriculum criteria, must know statements or key skill indicators.

Marking and feedback-

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 and will be written as a 'can you' statement in maths. The child's ability to complete the piece of work and fulfil the learning objective will be determined by the teacher and marked accordingly. For some lessons such as English, topic and science the children will have a work title. Successes within that piece of work would be recognised with a tick and/or teacher comment.

Feedback is provided during lessons where possible (both written and verbal) and children receive specific next steps about how to improve their work. Children are given time and support to read and review their work following marking. Children are

encouraged to use a pink pen to respond to teachers' comments, edit their work and to make any corrections.

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. In Science and Topic, children regularly highlight their 'must knows' to self-assess their learning in those subjects. This then informs future planning (See Assessment policy).

Pupil Targets are set at the beginning of Autumn term following senior leaders meeting with teachers using the prior attainment data. Pupil Progress Meetings take place termly (end of Autumn Term, Spring and Summer term) with senior leaders. Support and intervention is then put in for pupils who have not made sufficient progress to remove the barriers and enable them to make progress.

Learning at Home

It is vital that a strong partnership is built with parents and homework gives the chance for parents to become involved in their child's learning. Homework gives the opportunity to reinforce what has been covered in lessons, practise a skill or to introduce a new topic. Every half term, a homework menu is provided for children and parents which includes mandatory and optional tasks; project-based homework is shared on here. A family challenge is also set during every holiday with ideas of joint activities.

Children who do not have the support at home are invited to attend the Friday afternoon or early morning clubs so staff can help them complete their homework.

The Monitoring of Teaching and Learning

At Beech Hill School, our judgement of Teaching and Learning is formulated through a clear picture of what is 'typical' across our school. This will take place at least once a half term and will comprise of information from lesson visits, pupil interviews and work scrutinies triangulated to identify strengths and areas for development. Subject leaders and the SLT (Senior Leadership Team) are involved in 'deep-dives' throughout each academic year to monitor teaching and learning in specific subjects. External Consultants are involved on a termly basis to quality assure judgements.

Pupil Voice

As we believe that it is important for our children to have a voice in all elements of school development, we train our school council members 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 September 2023)

- All children engaged in learning
- Collaborative learning
- Excellent behaviour for learning
- Creative learning opportunities
- Barriers removed so all children can access all parts of the lesson
- 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. Its purpose is to ensure that all members of staff share our same ethos for education.