**Eddleston Primary School**

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**Learning, Teaching & Assessment policy**

***February 2022***

**Learning, Teaching & Assessment Policy**

*The Scottish Attainment Challenge aims to raise the attainment of children and young people living in deprived areas, in order to close the equity gap. It will drive forward improvements in educational outcomes to ensure that everyone is encouraged to be the best they can be.*

Scottish Attainment Challenge, Scottish Government 2022

In Eddleston Primary School, we are committed to offering **high** **quality learning experiences** that are relevant, challenging and enjoyable. Our school vision, ***‘BEST’*** sets our belief that all our learners aspire to be the best they can be. To be kind, to encourage, to share achievements and to work as a team. Our role, as staff is to provide excellent teaching, high quality resources and carefully planned learning opportunities, to encourage and support all learners to achieve great things in their lives – both what they can do now and what they will do in the future.

In Eddleston Primary School, we aim to develop key learner qualities through our curriculum. We want our young people to be responsible, resourceful, resilient and reflective learners. We have high aspirations for our learners and aim to work in partnership with parents and carers and external agencies to both inspire and support our young people.

This policy underpins everything we do at Eddleston Primary School. We believe that all learners should have the opportunity to achieve their full potential. Teachers are aware that their central role is one which maximises effective learning by using appropriate and challenging teaching strategies.

In Eddleston Primary School, we actively encourage our learners to:

* Be active participants in their learning process.
* Take personal pride in their own learning.
* Support and encourage each other.
* Contribute to a positive ethos where all forms of achievement are celebrated.

Learning and Teaching takes place in the following curricular areas:

* Expressive Arts
* Health and Wellbeing
* Literacy & English
* Mathematics and Numeracy
* Religious and Moral Education
* Science
* Social Subjects
* Technologies

Learners should also experience a degree of **personalisation and choice** within their learning, building **skills** in contexts specific to their interests and aptitudes. This may lead to engagement with a number of learning opportunities beyond those subject areas listed above. In addition to discrete subjects, there are three areas of learning for which **all teachers are responsible,** and which feature in all subject areas:

* Health and wellbeing
* Literacy & English
* Numeracy & Mathematics

**Learning Environment**

An excellent classroom ethos and environment is essential to effective learning and teaching. Staff have developed guidelines in which the fundamental requirements for an effective learning environment are shared. These guidelines ensure we consistently create and provide effective learning environments which strive to meet the needs of all our learners.

**What do our lessons at Eddleston Primary School look like?**

The following features form part of **all** lessons at Eddleston Primary School:

* **Positive relationships:** These are crucial to learner success and are supported by a nurturing, calm, supportive and restorative learning environment.
* **Learning Intentions:** These outline what learning is expected to take place and link clearly to tasks and activities in the class. Pupils will discuss previous learning (what they already know) to make links and progress with their learning.
* **Success Criteria:** Learners can measure their progress against these and use them to evaluate their learning and others (peer assessment). These are co-constructed with learners so they are meaningful and provide the steps to be successful in their learning.
* **Effective questioning:** Questions can be used to check for understanding, inspire discussion and promote higher order thinking skills.
* **Feedback:** Ongoing dialogue between the teacher and the learner is crucial for continuous progress. In some lessons, learners will also provide feedback to each other and to the teacher. Previous feedback is often reviewed before starting a task to ensure pupils are aware of next steps.
* **Pace, challenge and support:** Effective differentiation is implemented to ensure that all learners are able to make appropriate progress.
* **Learning conversations:** These help learners to understand what they have learned and to identify their next steps in learning. They may take part at stages throughout the lesson and/or at the end of a lesson.

Effective teachers use an array of teaching strategies as there is no single, universal approach that suits all learning situations. Different strategies used in different combinations with different groups of learners will improve learning outcomes. The following aspects of learning and teaching feature:

* **Co-created Learning Intentions and Success Criteria:** In collaboration with the Class Teacher, learners are able to agree on the learning they will engage in, how they will learn and on the methods they will use to check their progress**.**
* **A Growth Mindset:** We encourage an ethos where our learners develop an understanding that abilities, skills and intelligence can be developed. When learners believe they can progress, they understand that effort and determination can make them stronger.
* **Higher Order Thinking Skills:** Learners use critical, logical, reflective, creative and meta-cognitive (thinking about thinking) skills, activated when they encounter unfamiliar problems, uncertainties and questions.
* **Active learning:** These experiences engage learners and challenge thinking using real-life contexts, imaginary and social situations.
* **Learning through Play:** Play is an important part of a child's development. Playing helps children's brains to develop, and for their language and communication skills to mature. Through engaging in play, learners will enhance and develop many crucial skills including communication, problem-solving skills, creativity and curiosity.
* **Learner Participation**: Learners engage in practices and dialogue with staff, parents, carers, and community members to create positive outcomes and changes through meaningful contexts that further develop the necessary skills required for learning, life and work e.g. Pupil Groups and HGIOURS self-evaluation.
* **Cooperative and collaborative learning:** Learners are given opportunities to think, learn and talk together.
* **Skills for Learning, Life and Work:** Through Developing our Young Workforce,we aim to build skills that are transferable and can be utilised beyond school, such as teamwork, problem solving, communication, and leadership.
* **Digital literacy:** ICT is used to encourage new ways to engage our learners in a variety of approaches to learning.
* **Outdoor learning:** Outdoor environments around school and those further afield are explored to inspire learners and experience learning in a different context.
* I**nterdisciplinary learning** **(IDL)** experiences which focus on skills development and the links between different subjects. Interdisciplinary learning is one way to bring ideas together resulting in pupils transferring and applying knowledge or skills to new problems or other areas of learning.
* **Peer and self assessment:** Based on a shared understanding of the learning intentions and success criteria, learners are able to assess their own work and that of their peers to identify strengths and next steps.

An effective lesson should have three distinct phases: **introduction, time on task and plenary**. Teaching staff should refer to the guidance of the three distinct phases to inform their practice to ensure they are providing excellent learning and teaching experiences for their learners.

**Supporting Learning & Teaching**

To ensure effective learning and teaching, learners will have access to a variety of supports to enhance their learning experiences if and when required. These may include:

* Support for Learning
* Members of the Senior Leadership Team
* Targeted Intervention

**How do we know learning and teaching is successful?**

At Eddleston Primary School, we evaluate learning and teaching on an ongoing basis through a range of quality assurance procedures. These include monitoring, self-evaluation and planning for improvement. Since assessment is integral to learning, teaching and the curriculum, these quality assurance approaches apply equally to assessment. Quality assurance activities include:

* **Classroom visits** involving every member of teaching staff.
* **Learning walks** undertaken by the Senior Leadership Team, who visit every learning environment and classroom.
* Engagement with **Pupil Parliament** and **Focus Discussion Groups** to discuss learners’ experiences.
* **Reflection and self-evaluation** within stages, departments and across the whole school.
* Effective analysis of and use of **assessment** data by all members of SLT and teaching staff.
* **Moderation** of learning, teaching and assessment of curricular area.

Please refer to our Quality Assurance Overview and Learning & Teaching Toolkit for further detail.

**Assessment**

‘Assessment is an integral part of learning, teaching and the curriculum. It helps teachers, learners, parents and others to understand the depth and breadth of learning established in respect of each curriculum level or each relevant qualification or award so that progress and next steps can be identified, discussed and planned.’

The Scottish Approach to Assessment, Scottish Government, 2019

At Eddleston Primary School we have clear approaches to assessing learner progress and achievement. Assessment approaches are matched to the needs of learners as part of the continuous process of planning for learning and teaching. Refer to assessment calendar for overview of when assessments are carried out.

**How does assessment support learning?**

Regular assessment is undertaken in order to:

* Identify current **strengths** and **development needs** of individuals, classes and the wider school context.
* Identify **next steps** to ensure and support continued **progress.**
* Keep **parents and carers and other involved adults** informed about learners’ progress.
* Provide a **summary** of what learners, classes and the wider school have achieved.

**What does assessment at Eddleston Primary School look like?**

Assessment is crucial to Learning and Teaching at Eddleston Primary School. Teachers use a variety of assessment methods to assess progress on an ongoing basis both as part of daily learning and teaching and at the end of topics or units.

Assessment methods may include:

* **Observing and listening** to learners carrying out tasks e.g. group discussion and problem solving activities.
* Looking at what learners **write and make** e.g. posters, booklets, and mind maps.
* Providing discussion activities in **asking** and **answering** **questions** e.g. exploring ‘What would happen if?’ will facilitate learners to not only demonstrate their skills and understand their own learning but to challenge and support their peers.
* Learner’s **personal reflections** through considering e.g. ‘What have I learned?’, ‘How did I complete a task?’ and ‘How has my learning progressed?’ will facilitate learners to demonstrate their understanding of their own learning.
* **High Quality Assessments** are used to assess a wide range of learning through a meaningful context. It demonstrates a learner’s knowledge and understanding by indicating breadth, challenge and application of skills and learning.
* **Standardised Assessments** help to provide a clearer illustration of our learners’ progress providing details of learners’ strengths and areas for development. Data is used to identify next steps in learning, both for individual learners, and which learning and teaching strategies might be used.

Where appropriate, learners have the chance to demonstrate a degree of **personalisation and choice** as to how they might achieve the intended outcomes and evidence their progress in learning.

In order to support learners in achieving their best, teachers will co construct and share appropriate:

* **Learning Intentions** ‘To write a formal letter’*.*
* **Success Criteria**  ‘I can place the senders address on the right hand side.

**‘**I can correctly place the date’.

‘I can correctly use ‘Yours faithfully,’ (Dear Sir/Madam **or**

 ‘Yours sincerely,’ (Dear Mr./Mrs…)

**How do we help to ensure success in assessments?**

When introducing new learning, our teachers will:

* **Discuss** with learners what learning is to take place and what is expected of them.
* **Clarify** the learning intentions and success criteria in ‘learner friendly’ language and identify the appropriate experiences for achieving these.
* **Share** challenging and realistic expectations.

As well as teacher led assessments learners will also lead and participate in assessment opportunities. At key points, learners engage in **self assessment** (e.g. identify what they have done well, what their next steps might be, learning logs; traffic lighting) and **peer assessment** (e.g. giving peers two stars and a wish) activities to demonstrate and embed their understanding of standards and expectations.

Learners need **timely, accurate feedback** about their learning. Assessments will not always have a mark or a grade attached, as research shows that learners are likely to make better progress if they are given appropriate and relevant comments based feedback to help them improve their work.

We aim to ensure that all learners are confident about where they are in their learning journey and able discuss their progress with their classroom teacher.

Learners take part in regular **learner conversations** with their teachers as part of planned activities in the classroom. This means they can identify the progress they have made and consider their next steps. This supports them in setting personal learning targets.

**How do we ensure a consistent understanding of assessment data?**

* **Moderation** – Regular moderation activities are set in our Quality Assurance calendar. Engaging in the moderation process with colleagues ensures staff make consistent, valid and reliable decisions on learners’ progress towards, and achievement of, a level.
* **Self-Evaluation** is a collaborative, reflective process of internal school review. This ongoing process provides staff with the means to evaluate learning and teaching, ensuring a shared understanding of data and identifies priorities which will improve outcomes for learners.
* **Collegiate activity** Collegiate activities link closely to identified School Improvement Plan priorities and are carefully planned to ensure strategies, methods and practice continues to enhance learning, teaching and assessment in our school. Examples of collegiate activity may include professional enquiry, professional dialogue with colleagues, quality assurance visits, peer evaluation and collaborative practices.

**What does moderation at Eddleston Primary School look like?**

*‘Moderation is a term used to describe approaches for arriving at a shared understanding of standards and expectations for the Broad General Education. It involves teachers working together, drawing on guidance and exemplification and building on existing standards and expectations to:*

* *Plan learning, teaching and assessment.*
* *Check that assessment tasks and activities provide learners with fair and valid opportunities to meet the standards and expectations before assessments are used.*
* *Sample evidence from learners work and review teachers’ judgements.*
* *Agree strengths in learners’ performances and next steps in learning.*
* *Provide feedback on teachers’ judgements to inform improvement in practices*.’

Quality Assurance and Moderation, BTC 5

At Eddleston Primary School we have clear moderation processes within our school. Moderation processes include:

* Identified opportunities for moderation activity
* Clear guidance and agreement on the focus for moderation.
* Robust professional dialogue using Benchmarks; leading to valid and reliable teacher judgement of achievement of a level.
* Participation in Regional Improvement Collaborative and National moderation events when available.

**Progress in Learning within a Level**

We have processes in place to monitor, track and record learner progress within a level and achievement of a level. Staff and children gather evidence from observation and dialogue, STAR folders, teacher assessments and standardised assessments.

SLT & SfL meet with class teachers termly to discuss and track learner progress and achievement, with a focus on target/ attainment projections of achievement of a level. Agreeing actions to raise attainment is an integral element of this professional dialogue.

A small number of learners are working towards individual milestones and progress in learning is recorded appropriately.

**Guidance on using the Benchmarks**

Education Scotland Benchmarks and Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes are the key resource which we use to plan learning, teaching and assessment. We also use the Benchmarks as the standard for moderation of achievement of a level in literacy and numeracy.

* The Benchmarks support teacher professional judgement of achievement of a level.
* The Benchmarks should be used to monitor progress towards achievement of a level.
* Benchmarks should be used to review a body of evidence to determine if the standard has been achieved.

*‘It is not necessary for learners to demonstrate evidence of every aspect of learning within the Benchmarks before moving on to the next level. However, it is important that this is interpreted in ways which ensure no major gaps in children and young people’s learning, for example with respect to the relevant organisers in each curriculum area’.*

*ES Benchmarks, August 2016*

Effective monitoring, recording and tracking processes look at the learner holistically and are informed by assessment of evidence related to the Benchmarks and gathered from the four contexts for learning. Teachers must be able to demonstrate confidence in their assessment of learners through a body of evidence to support their professional judgement

**Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSA)**

From August 2017, national standardised assessments have were introduced in all schools across Scotland in aspects of reading, writing and numeracy, for all children in P1, P4, P7 and S3.

The results from the standardised assessments provide an **additional** source of nationally consistent information to inform teachers’ professional judgement, both when planning next steps and when considering whether children have achieved Curriculum for Excellence levels.

The national standardised assessments are a diagnostic tool which sit alongside a wide range of other evidence, including ongoing classroom assessment of all aspects of literacy and numeracy. Taken together, ongoing assessment information and national standardised assessment results will provide a more complete and balanced picture of how children are progressing, giving teachers the information they need to support every child to succeed.

At Eddleston Primary, learners complete SNSA assessments in March (P4 and P7) and May (P1)

**Achievement of a Level**

By ‘achievement of a level’ we mean the learner has achieved a ***breadth*** of learning across the experiences and outcomes for a significant aspect of learning, has responded consistently well to the level of ***challenge*** set out in these experiences and outcomes, has moved forward to more challenging learning in some aspects; and can ***apply*** what they have learned in new and unfamiliar situations.

**Evidence**

Achievement of a level cannot be determined by evidence related to an individual outcome or provided by a single isolated piece of work or test. It should be holistic assessment demonstrating understanding as well as knowledge.

A quality body of evidence from across the four contexts of learning is used to support assessment judgement and decisions about next steps. However, teachers should not spend onerous time gathering evidence.

Evidence of learning may include:

* Examples from day to day learning.
* Learner conversations.
* Standardised assessment.
* Teacher observation, including peer classroom visits.
* Holistic assessments developed by teachers, planned as part of learning and teaching.

**How do we report on progress at Eddleston Primary School?**

Reporting informs parents and carers of progress at intervals throughout the school year. Reporting involves the learner and engages parents and carers actively in their child’s learning.

Reporting will:

* Describe strengths and areas for development.
* Show progress across the curriculum.
* Show achievement within Curriculum for Excellence levels.
* Demonstrate achievement in different contexts.
* Share learning goals and next steps.

A range of reporting approaches are used at Eddleston Primary School, including:

* Parent Consultations – twice per year
* Written Reports – Interim & end of year
* STAR Folders
* Ongoing dialogue
* Certificates of Achievement
* Photos on school’s social media

This document works in align with *‘Learning & Teaching Toolkit, Self-Evaluation Tool –*

 *At Eddleston we try our BEST*