Sacred Heart Primary School
2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy

Aims / Rationale:

At Sacred Heart Primary School we recognise that quality classroom practice is the key to improving learning and pupil achievement. This policy is not designed to be a comprehensive 'recipe' of how to teach at Sacred Heart, but it aims to outline the fundamental principles which underpin all learning and teaching at our school. This policy has been developed after much staff development and action research into using formative assessment strategies in previous academic years. The aim is both to reflect the current good practice in the school, and to encourage further development of interactive and formative assessment strategies.

This policy does not stand alone: to be effective it must be embedded into our classroom practice and other related policies. Therefore, teachers should also refer to:
- Behaviour Policy
- Marking and Feedback Policy

and will also refer to other materials where they have contributed to our shared understanding of good practice.

Learning Intentions

Lesson design needs to begin with selecting appropriate learning intentions according to the needs of the class, based on prior learning and understanding.

Learning Intentions should:
- set challenging expectations
- be used as an assessment tool for future learning
- support learning outcomes, in that each learning intention is a small step in arriving at what the learner is supposed to know or be able to do
- aid the selection and design of activities to be undertaken in a lesson / series of lessons

Learning Intentions should not:
- simply describe that activity that learners are doing

Learning intentions may need to be decontextualised. It is expected that during the planning process, teachers will consider and record both the learning intention and the context. The context is a way of focussing the learning intention.

Learning intentions can be decontextualised in one of two ways: into the context in which the learning will be taking place; *or* the 'vehicle' (a secure transferable skill) which will support the pupils in achieving the expected learning.

the context in which they are learning the skill/LI	the 'vehicle' that will help pupils achieve the LI
LI: to describe a character Context: Cinderella	L.I. To compare rates of dissolving Context: Line graphs.
LI: to create a graphic score Context: Indiana Jones Theme	LI: to demonstrate knowledge of the events in a volcanic eruption Context: diary entry

When the context acts as a 'vehicle' to support pupils learning, it should be a process, resource or genre they're familiar with. The new learning is the learning intention (For more information read Shirley Clarke, Outstanding Formative Assessment, Chapter 6).

In some lessons, especially in maths, it may <u>not</u> be appropriate to use a context because choosing the best 'vehicle' may be a key element of the learning.
For example: In a lesson where the L.I. is **'To add multiples of 10'** learners may be selecting between number lines, Dienes, formal written methods etc. This is an example of an open Learning Intention. An open learning intention allows for choice in how it is achieved, a closed Learning Intention has a set method that must be used. i.e. To add multiples of 10 using a number line.

Notes on skills vs knowledge
Most learning will be skills based. Once the learners are secure or familiar with the skill this can be used as a 'vehicle' for learning or demonstrating closed or knowledge-based learning objectives.

Example shift from learning to applying a skill: LI: to interpret information Context: line graph	Example shift from learning to applying a skill: LI: to know the impact of exercise on the pulse Context: interpreting information on a line graph

Curriculum for Excellence requires the learning of new knowledge which is closed and does not demonstrate a transferable skill. The context could be a pre-taught and familiar skill for pupils to demonstrate their newly acquired knowledge.
Eg *LI: to know how sound travels*
Context: labelled diagram (this would have been taught before so the previous success criteria can be used)

Long term LIs
During the planning process, it may be relevant to consider the long term learning intentions that can subsequently be broken down into smaller learning intentions for a week or longer.

Long term (umbrella) Learning Intention (with SC)	
LI: to write a recount **Success criteria:** Chronological order, Time openers, Share feelings/ reactions, Description of people and places, 1st person, Past tense	
Short term Learning intentions that build up skills to apply to above LI (each will have own SC):	
LI: to put events in order Context: brushing your teeth	LI: to identify suitable synonyms Context: feeling words *Or* LI: to use a thesaurus Context: feeling synonyms

Success criteria

Why?
- Students have the tools/ support to achieve LI.
- Highlights that learning requires the applications of specific skills.
- An understanding that there are various skills that have progression and need practising.
- Pupils and adults are more aware of how to make real time improvements to work

Success criteria must be considered and recorded during the planning process but has higher impact when generated with the learners, using child talk. Longer term outcomes will generate longer term success criteria. Each feature or step could be broken down into individual teaching opportunities that will build up over a period of time. (see above)

Instructional vs recipe
There are generally two types of success criteria. Instructional is a series of steps (procedural) that have to be followed in order to achieve the learning intention (often found in maths). These should start with 'Remember to…'. Recipe style success criteria are a selection of features that can be chosen and manipulated to achieve the learning intention. The recipe style will lead to different successful outcomes (often used for writing). These should start with 'Choose from…'.
Some common success criteria for writing (eg good sentences/ paragraphs etc) can be developed and referred to in all lesson over a longer period of time.
(See Shirley Clarke Outstanding Formative Assessment Chapter 7).

Multiple Success Criteria
Some lessons may use multiple sets of SC generated in previous lessons. The learners making their own decisions about when to use SC and which SC to use is part of their route to mastery.

Ways of generating
Provide examples of anonymous work or WAGOLLs that is good and very good for pupils to scrutinise; adult modelling; retrospective success criteria; revisit old success criteria; add to or amend previously generated; self or group generating success criteria. (see Shirley Clarke Active Learning through Formative assessment Chapter 8)

Opportunities for use during the lesson

It is an aid for peer and self assessment; for pupils to refer to for self improvement; and ensures all adults understand what is required for all pupils to achieve. Success criteria can be used as a tool for differentiation (for example: learners to focus on one or two steps or elements; or some elements may be provided by the teacher; or additional elements added to extend). The success criteria should be referred to throughout the whole lesson or even over a series of lessons.

(See Shirley Clarke Outstanding Formative Assessment Chapter 9)

Teaching Strategies:

Our school is a multi composite school with the class structure changing on an annual basis. To ensure motivation, engagement and challenge for all learners, a variety of learning experiences should be used.

1. Whole Class Teaching:

Learning Partners:

A key element in teaching at Sacred Heart is the use of learning partners or talk partners. We recognise the importance of speaking and listening in all areas of the curriculum, and the need for all learners to articulate and therefore extend their learning.

Learning partners should:
- be organised and changed regularly in and across classes
- be displayed in classrooms
- have good speaking and listening modelled for them, including the development and constant review of 'what makes a good learning partner'.

(For further information refer Shirley Clarke Outstanding Formative Assessment Chapter 4)

Interactive Strategies:

There are numerous interactive strategies that can be used in whole-class teaching to engage learners. Such strategies often provide teachers with AifL information, including:

- Thumbs up, thumbs down to show agreement / understanding
- Mini whiteboards / show me.
- True/false sorting activities.
- Cards/ number fans.

- Use of 'no hands up' random selection after talk partners have discussed (ie names on lolly-sticks)
- Use of drama / role play
- Hotseating
- Alongside these, there is enormous scope for using ICT resources (iPads, interactive whiteboards, mirroring and visualisers) to ensure learners are engaged with their learning. (For further information refer Shirley Clarke Outstanding Formative Assessment Chapter 5)

The information gained from all of the above strategies should be used to determine a shift in lesson pathway immediately, or in subsequent lessons, for particular groups or all learners, in order to challenge their potential and ensure learning time is maximised.

<u>Effective Questioning:</u>
Effective questioning means challenging learners to deepen their thinking. Teachers need to take time to plan and record effective questions which go beyond straight recall. Teachers' responses to effective questioning should inform lesson adaptation to suit the needs of the learners. Questioning strategies and prompts include:
- Giving a range of answers for discussion
- Turning the question into a statement
- Finding opposites – why does one work, one doesn't?
- Giving the answer and asking how it was arrived at
- Asking a question from an opposing standpoint
(For further information refer to Shirley Clarke 'Active Learning through Formative Assessment' chapter 5)
- 'Mount Cognito'
-Blooms Taxonomy

<u>Modelling:</u>
A key aspect of the teaching should be the clear and specific modelling of the learning that learners are required to demonstrate or apply. This is linked to generating success criteria.

2. Group / Independent work strategies:

As the promotion of speaking and listening is a key priority in our curriculum, learners should be given opportunities to work collaboratively, or to share their ideas with others regularly. Specific strategies for collaborative learning (which help make the curriculum accessible for all learners) may include:

- Snowballing (learning partners first, then share with another pair/group – do you agree?)
- Jigsaw (groups research one aspect of a topic becoming 'experts'. Re-organise into home groups to complete task using expertise of each member)
- Matching / sorting
- Diamond ranking
- Mind / concept mapping
- Using speaking frames
- Drama / roleplay

Teachers should consider the structure and learning behaviours which will help the group work to make the most impact (eg. assigning roles)

In many lessons, there will be opportunities for learners to practise their skills independently.

Differentiation:

Differentiation is essential in matching learning opportunities with individual learning needs.
Differentiation can occur in
- the learning process - varying learning activities or strategies to provide appropriate methods for students to explore the concepts
- levels of support – providing feedback along with working with individuals or groups who may be finding it challenging in that lesson (as opposed to pre-defined groups).
- varying the environment in the classroom – using different teaching styles, groupings, levels of support
- varying the expectations in the use of the success criteria -learners to focus on one or two steps or elements; or some elements may be provided by the teacher; or additional elements added to extend. Making decisions about which previous SC to use and when, or removing SC

altogether, are also opportunities for learners to show deeper understanding.
- the <u>content</u> delivered may be varied for some specific learners, though for most with our focus on mastery, the content will be the same.

It is key to recognise the link between effective formative assessment and effective differentiation: in order to differentiate effectively, teachers must have a clear understanding of exactly where the learners are at.
We must ensure that we offer all learners access to an appropriate curriculum. In some instances it may mean an individual curriculum, although more often it means personalising learning by using some of the following strategies:

- scaffolding support as appropriate to support the child
- providing resources which are appropriate: careful selection and evaluation is required
- planning for support of groups or individuals by additional adults or the teacher
- being aware of groupings to support learners (see below)
- providing writing frames appropriate to the capabilities of the child
- adapting activities as appropriate
- providing word banks / pictures
- pulling out groups as needed
- promoting independent choice
- providing alternate methods of recording work (eg ICT, including iPads and talking tins)

Pupil Groupings:
Teachers should plan opportunities for learners to work collaboratively with others in a range of different groupings to enrich their learning experiences and opportunities. Grouping should be fluid and be relevant for pupils according to their next learning steps.

Teachers will often use in-lesson assessment information to identify groups to move onto independent work or those requiring additional support.