



LANGHOLM PRIMARY LANGHOLM ACADEMY CANONBIE PRIMARY

Teaching and Learning Policy

Honesty-Ambition-Respect-Responsibility-Kindness

This policy sets out to meet the needs of all practitioners in our Nursery, Primary and Secondary sectors at Langholm and Canonbie Schools. We have assembled our practice statements, reflecting current research and educational thinking on Teaching and Learning.

Aims of the Policy

- To outline key messages about what constitutes high quality learning and teaching based on proven research.
- To communicate school expectations in relation to best practices in learning & teaching.
- To offer practical advice and support to all practitioners in each of our sectors.
- To further develop shared understanding, collegiate and partnership working throughout our cluster of schools.
- To ensure we embed fully our schools values of Honesty, Ambition, Respect, Responsibility and Kindness into our teaching and learning.

Child- Centred Learning placing children's rights at the heart of our classrooms

Our policy places our pupils at the heart of the Teaching and Learning process, and sets out to ensure that all learners are empowered to become:

- Successful learners
- Confident Individuals
- Responsible Citizens
- Effective Contributors



School Curriculum

We deliver the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence. This is a curriculum for 3 to 18 year olds. The curriculum contains the four contexts for learning which are...

- The ethos and life of the school as a community
- Curriculum areas and subjects



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- Interdisciplinary learning
- Opportunities for personal achievement.

The curriculum involves children being actively engaged in planning and carrying out lessons and demonstrating their learning in those ways.

Learning areas

Our curriculum is made up of the following learning areas

- Expressive Arts
- Health and Wellbeing
- English Language & Literacy, Scots Language
- Modern Foreign Languages (German Nursery to S6), British Sign Language (P5 to S2)
- Mathematics & Numeracy
- Religious and Moral Education
- Sciences
- Social Studies
- Technologies

Within each learning area there are a range of Experiences and Outcomes for children at each curriculum level. These provide teachers, children & parents/ carers with the detail of the curriculum and can be viewed at www.educationscotland.gov.uk/learningandteaching/the curriculum

Curriculum levels

The curriculum is organised into levels

Nursery & Primary school

- Early level Nursery (year 1 & year 2) and P1
- Level 1 P2, P3 & P4
- Level 2 & Level 3 P5, P6 & P7

Secondary school

- Level 2, 3 & 4 S1, S2 & S3
- Senior Phase S4, S5 & S6





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Teaching approaches

Teachers use a wide range of approaches to engage children in their learning.

Recapping

How? Teachers begin with a connection to prior learning (short review of what was studied in the previous class or a spaced recall practice task). This might include key concepts, important words and formulae through

discussion and active learning such as games. Other aspects, which can be reviewed, include homework and corrections or problem areas faced by our pupils. Activities could include flash cards, pop quizzes, games or use of mnemonics to remember difficult sequences.

Why? Beginning each class with a short review can make every class more effective and learning more achievable. Repetition and practice strengthens cognitive connections in the brain, helping to retain information or learning. Our teachers plan activities which engage students, get them thinking and provide a clear focus on their learning. Thus creating a purposeful atmosphere in which teachers can extend their thinking. Providing a learning environment where; visibility of skills, meaningful discussion and reflection on skills, and the opportunity to profile skills experiences, will support young people with their ability to understand, recognise and articulate their skills development. Learning Intentions and Success Criteria will also be shared during this session, whether verbal, visual or written.

New concepts

How? Teachers need to know pupils' prior knowledge before introducing a new concept. This can be achieved through research projects, self-reflection, mind maps and class discussion. New concepts will be broken down into

small steps, building on the foundation of prior learning.

Why? We introduce new concepts to allow pupils to discover and appreciate different methods and options available for their learning. Our working memory is small, only handling a few bits of information at once. Presenting new material in small steps reduces cognitive load and promotes pupil confidence. This allows our pupils to endeavour to learn new skills and concepts in a supportive manner.

Modelling

How? Our teachers use technologies to aid modelling such as PowerPoints and visualizers to show pupils the standard of work they are striving for. They may also model desired level of work in jotters and textbooks

through written examples or screen share. They co-create shared success criteria presenting these visually for learners.

Why? Modelling helps our pupils visualise what a successful piece of work looks like. This gives them a structure to follow to reduce their cognitive load. Modelling is an instructional strategy whereby our teachers demonstrate a new concept or approach to learning and pupils learn by observing.



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Modelling describes the process of learning or acquiring new information, skills, or behaviour through observation, rather than through direct experience. This supports our pupils to be responsible for their own learning approaches.

Questioning

How? For our teachers, questioning is a key skill. Similarly, ways of helping pupils develop their own ability to raise and formulate questions should be taught. Asking questions and knowing the right question to ask is an

important skill pupils can develop. Effective questions focus on eliciting the process, i.e. the 'how' and 'why,' in our pupil's response, as opposed to answers which just detail 'what.' Using them in the classroom creates opportunities for students to analyse their own thinking, that of their peers, and their work. There are two main types of questions that are used in our classrooms: closed questions and open questions.

Closed questions are those that prompt a simple response, such as yes, no, or a short answer. For example:

Name this saw.

What do you need to paint a picture?

Can you use a peeler safely?

What is the height of Mount Everest?

They're quick and easy to respond to and generally reduce confusion. They're also particularly useful for challenging pupils' memory and recalling facts.

Open questions are those that require a deeper level of thinking and often prompt a lengthier response. They ask pupils to think and reflect, provide opinions and feelings, and take control of the conversation and endeavour to find solutions. For example:

What do you think would happen if Lucy takes the dog in the park?

What would you do differently next time?

Can you describe how you manufactured that joint?

Can you evaluate the menu provided?

Open questions are advantageous because they enrich the learning experience by encouraging individual thinking. They also give our teachers the opportunity to check pupils' understanding and knowledge, and assess their ability to apply this knowledge.

Why? Teachers ask questions to engage and challenge pupils as well as checking on prior knowledge and understanding. Using effective questioning in our classrooms brings a host of benefits, as it:

- Encourages pupils to engage with their work and each other.
- Helps pupils to think out loud.
- Facilitates learning through active discussion.
- Empowers pupils to feel confident about their ideas.
- Improves speaking and listening skills.
- Builds critical thinking skills.
- Teaches respect for other people's opinions.



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Purposeful Activities

How? Our teachers use a range of HOTS (higher order thinking skills) based activities which link directly to the learning intentions reflecting a foundation of active learning. These activities take into account differentiation

and involve the teacher specifically highlighting the HOTS based skill to the whole class. Teachers make links to different careers to promote DYW (developing young workforce) and often review these by referring to the STEM(science, technology, engineering, maths) /DYW skills on display in class.

Why? Teachers set tasks which promote independent learning and develop relevant skills to promote lifelong learning and increase employability. The aim of all activities should be to develop and acquire these skills through pupils being responsible and endeavouring to achieve.

Differentiation

How? Our teachers use a range of tasks, activities, strategies and resources including digital technology to ensure appropriate pace and challenge for all learners. Differentiation in our classrooms will include, but is not

limited to the following:

- Opportunity to select the level of challenge independently (Mild/Hot/Spicy options).
- Flexible-pace learning: Allows pupils to progress onto extension tasks, whilst allowing other pupils an opportunity to complete their exercise at a comfortable speed, allowing for support, stretch and challenge.
- Skilful questioning
- Collaborative learning: Forming mixed-ability groups gives pupils a platform to vocalise their ideas, while learning from their peers collaboratively.
- Progressive tasks: Allows work to be set to match the needs of the individual student.
- Digital resources: By using interactive tools, our pupils get the opportunity to approach a topic or subject from different angles. In some cases, this can also highlight a skill or passion in pupils, while others might work more effectively with non-traditional resources and mediums. This method of differentiation allows different materials, platforms and tools to be used to bring about the same learning outcome and give pupils confidence in their digital skills.
- Verbal support: Verbal dialogue is adapted including during vocal explanations to support different academic levels. Using targeted questioning can produce different responses in pupils of different learning profiles.
- Additional support delivered from the teacher directly, or a learning support assistant
- Ongoing assessment: Regular assessment and feedback, allows teachers to adapt their teaching methods according to their various pupils' needs and learning conditions.



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Why? To ensure that every pupil receives equitable access to learning which both challenges and supports appropriately. Learning opportunities must be equal as far as is possible, and all pupils must be supported to engage with their learning at their personal optimal ability.



Digital Literacy

How?

Teachers effectively use Digital resources. Desktops, Interactive panels, laptops, I-pads and smart phones are commonly used for learning, as teachers find ways to employ today's technologies in school classrooms across subjects. They use Digital resources to access, process, evaluate and communicate information and data. It is essential that ICT is used to support good classroom practice. Any technology used must enhance carefully planned teaching and learning goals.

Why?

Digital literacy is another essential skill all learners need to develop. Over the past decade, the use of digital technologies in classrooms has continued to expand. Including ICT-based resources and activities in teaching programmes can be challenging, but it is vital for today's generation of learners.

One example of this is when teachers use technology, e.g. an interactive whiteboard, to develop understanding of new ideas in a way that engages the whole class as active participants rather than as another medium for the teacher to lecture. With an abundance of information on the internet information literacy has become critically important. Knowing how to access information is one skill but even more important is the ability to critically engage with the information and make balanced judgements about its meaning and reliability. This ability requires an understanding of the nature of the data and the area of knowledge to which it relates. For this reason, information literacy needs to be at the heart of each discipline and an area of interdisciplinary inquiry.



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Collaboration

How? Teachers plan activities to develop life skills such as teamwork and problem solving. They refer to our cluster Employability Skills:

Communication, Teamwork, Adaptability, Organisation, Creativity, Problem Solving, Resilience and Initiative

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2013, p. 6) defines collaboration as follows: 'Collaborative problem-solving competency is the capacity of an individual to effectively engage in a process whereby two or more agents attempt to solve a problem by sharing the understanding and effort required to come to a solution and pooling their knowledge, skills and efforts to reach that solution.'

Why?

The skills required to be an effective collaborator are different from those required to be a good individual learner. Many academic disciplines provide such opportunities including STEM challenges, science fieldwork and outdoor learning.

Active Learning

How? Pupils are encouraged to demonstrate their learning via personalisation and choice with particular emphasis on 'say, write, make do' as central outcomes where appropriate. Where possible, pupils are given opportunities to bring learning to life, indoors and outdoors in our learning environments.

Why? Active learning is "a method of learning in which students are actively or experientially involved in the learning process and where there are different levels of active learning, depending on student involvement." (Bonwell & Eison 1991). Active learning promotes recall and deeper understanding of material, as pupils are engaging with the content rather than simply listening to it. Active learning is important as children can develop their ideas and understanding using an ever-growing variety of practical interactions and implementation of processes which are built upon via self-initiated activities—moving, listening, searching, feeling, talking, experimenting and manipulating objects. In particular, pupils must engage in such higher-order thinking tasks as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation and it remains a central approach in the development of skills and understanding in a broad range of abilities and capacities.





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Assessment

How? Assessment for learning involves using assessment in the classroom to raise pupils' achievement. It is based on the idea that pupils will improve most if they understand the aim of their learning, where they are in relation to this aim and how they can achieve the aim, if they are clear on the co-created success criteria and how to achieve them.

In mixed ability classes it is essential that teachers "differentiate" the work given to different ability groups. Children's progress can then be assessed against the "learning intentions" in the curriculum planning. Planning and assessment form an ongoing cycle.

Effective assessment for learning involves: - sharing learning goals with pupils - helping pupils know and recognise the standards to aim for - providing feedback that helps pupils to identify how to improve - believing that every pupil can improve in comparison with previous achievements- both the teacher and pupils reviewing and reflecting on pupils' performance and progress - pupils learning self-assessment techniques to discover areas they need to improve - recognising that both motivation and self-esteem, crucial for effective learning and progress, can be increased by effective assessment techniques. Research has shown that being part of the review process raises standards and empowers pupils to take action to improve their performance.

Children and young people's learning is assessed in a variety of ways: By observing the pupils, by talking with them about their learning and designing assessment tasks/activities at the end of an area of learning in order to find out what pupils have learnt. In our primaries, children are given "tests" in the classroom from time to time and also to help them learn to work "against the clock". These include Accelerated Reading, Sumdog and Ros Wilson Writing assessments. The emphasis is not on pupils competing with each other, but on "improving on your own previous best". This motivates pupils to achieve at their own pace. Within our secondary our pupils are assessed more formally at the end of topic work, to plan and prepare teaching delivery for following topics. In SQA year groups (S4-S6) our pupils complete final examinations to assess knowledge, understanding and application of skills in subject areas.

Why? Assessment is an integral part of learning and teaching. It complements the process and can have different forms ,e.g. formative, summative, naturally-occurring evidence, homework, projects. Assessment is planned and success criteria should be shared with learners beforehand. A summary lesson before any formal assessment or a revision sheet can help to focus learners. Assessment should be followed-up with feedback to learners. A learning conversation should take place which should highlight points for improvement.

High quality feedback

How? 'Feedback is one of the most powerful influences on learning and achievement' (Hattie and Timperley 2007, Review of Educational Research March 2007, Vol. 77, No. 1, pp. 81). Our teachers follow an age appropriate, progressive, child friendly marking and feedback policy with colour coding showing praise and next steps. In our primaries, green pen is used to provide next steps and improvement comments. Pink pens are used to provide positive praise. Feedback is directly linked to clear Learning Intentions,



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shared Success Criteria or personalised targets. We empower pupils by encouraging self and peer feedback. A range of methods are used creatively within the guidance of the policy including both written and verbal responses e.g. pink and green pens, codes, check lists.

Staff have regular learner conversations referring to the Learning Intention and Success Criteria. Pupils are involved in identifying next steps and target setting. Terms such as 'what went well', 'even better if' and 'next steps' are used in written feedback to ensure understanding for pupils. This feedback will be provided directly to pupils and parents via interim reports, tracking and full reports followed by parents' evenings.

Why? High quality feedback empowers children to think about their own learning journey enabling them to build a growth mind-set and become resilient young adults who are intrinsically motivated. It acknowledges that we all make mistakes and they are part of our lifelong learning. It is a clear guideline for pupils to understand what they have done well and where they can improve. This empowers them in their own learning and allows for independence and being able to use feedback as a skill for work and employment. Within a culture of self-evaluation across our schools, all learners should be actively involved in the evaluation of their learning and in identifying next steps to ensure appropriate progression.

Plenaries

How? Plenaries are used by teachers either during or at the end of a lesson, to review the aims and consolidate pupils' learning. It is an evaluative part of a lesson, where pupils reflect on what they have learnt and achieved

during that teaching period. In our primaries this may look like: Learning Stars – what are we learning, why are we learning it, how are we learning it and what do we need to do to improve? · Games which refer to previous outcomes e.g. in maths playing a game recapping on forward and backwards sequences – Referring to working walls – for topic work, building up displays to show key learning taking place so pupils can refer back to it across their learning. In our secondary our plenaries review learning undertaken and assess pupil's learning, preparing for next steps in following lessons.

Why? Plenaries are used by teachers to review the lesson objectives and consolidate learning. This can be midway through, or at the end of a lesson. Students and teachers can reflect on the learning, ask questions, discuss next steps and celebrate good work and positive learning outcomes.



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