BRACKENAGH WEST PRIMARY SCHOOL

LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY

1. THE NATURE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

At Brackenagh West Primary School we believe that the propensity to learn is a natural human condition.

We recognise that learning can and does take place in a range of ways, at various rates, in any place and at any time. We also recognise that learning can involve the use of different intelligences and a variety of senses. We value all learning as a process to the development of the whole individual as a life long learner.

We consider that teaching should be specifically designed to expand and facilitate all learning opportunities. We also believe that teaching is the responsibility of the entire school community.

The nature, style and pace of teaching at Brackenagh West will vary depending on the nature of the learning and the learners.

At Brackenagh West we consider that learning and teaching are supported by the development and sustenance of certain values inclusive of:

- Self respect.
- Dignity.
- High self-esteem.
- Self discipline.
- Positivity.
- Appreciation of others.
- Independence.
- Interdependence.

As a learning community we will promote these values so that all members of the school community will become effective, life long learners.

2. THE AIMS OF OUR LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY

The fundamental aim is to ensure that every learning and teaching opportunity is maximised so that everyone involved is assisted in their pathway to lifelong learning.

2.1 In order to achieve this primary outcome we will endeavour to:

- Make all learning and teaching as exciting and interesting as possible.
- Design and implement learning and teaching activities which facilitate the development of independence among all learners.
- Cater for different types of intelligences and do so via a variety of teaching styles.
- Cater for all types of learning styles.
- Develop and support a range of teaching approaches that cater effectively for the whole ability spectrum in order that all pupils achieve maximum learning.
- Create and sustain a stimulating learning environment at all times.
- Provide appropriate staff development opportunities so that there are consistently high quality learning and teaching experiences within and across all year groups.
- Consistently monitor and evaluate provision and provide feedback to staff so as to ensure high quality learning and teaching experiences within and across all year groups.
- Acquire, maintain and utilise appropriate high quality resources to support all learning and teaching.

3 PLANNING FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

To help us secure high quality learning and teaching we plan thoroughly, via schemes of work, half termly and daily planning. There will be various aspects to our planning, these will include:

- Clear, specified learning outcomes.
- Differentiation of teaching activities for various ability groups.
- A clear breadth and balance to planned activities within and across curricular areas.
- Clear progression within planning.
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of learning and teaching.
- Opportunities for learners to engage in self-evaluation, where appropriate.

3.1 In order to achieve the above we recognise that appropriate time must be provided. Accordingly staff will have opportunities to:

- Plan collaboratively within key stages.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of previous planning so as to inform future planning.
- Reflect on existing practice in order to improve future provision.
- Acquire resources for effective learning and teaching activities.
- Efficiently plan and manage accelerated learning resources for effective classroom organisation.

4 CREATING A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

We will endeavour to ensure that:

- The learning environment will be safe, stimulating, bright, attractive, well-organised, well resourced and welcoming.
- All resources will be accessible, well-maintained, effectively displayed or stored.
- As appropriate there will be distinct areas within classrooms for specific learning to take place, eg: the library corner etc
- Careful attention will be given to physical conditions within the classroom, eg: it should be well ventilated and properly lit.

Within this learning environment, all children will feel valued and have their efforts rewarded and achievements celebrated. All will be encouraged to engage in meaningful, purposeful tasks with the emphasis placed on positive behaviour, good relationships and realistically high expectations for all learners.

5 STRATEGIES TO DEVELOP MOTIVATION AND ATTITUDES TO LEARNING

We will focus on positive behaviour, praising and rewarding individuals/groups who achieve the desired behaviour. Teachers will model desired/appropriate attitudes and also draw attention to these when they are evident in class. Our strategies will include the following:

- Set clear learning objectives so that the pupils are aware of what they are expected to learn/how they are expected to behave.
- Give appropriate responsibility to develop independence and self-motivation/self-discipline.
- Deliver interesting, varied and enjoyable lessons.
- Set achievable targets and state time deadlines.
- Develop confidence by creating a climate where opinions are valued.
- Ensure that classrooms are bright, welcoming and child-freindly, and that pupils' work is prominently displayed.
- Devise a system of rewards for effort and special achievements. These can include:
    - Pupil of the Week Award.
    - Class of the Month Award.
    - Motivational marking, stickers, certificates.
    - Treats/prizes.
    - Use of Praise Padz / notes home.
    - Showing work to another teacher/class/principal etc.

6 INDEPENDENT LEARNERS

Independent learning will be developed in a variety of ways **appropriate** to the age and ability of the learner. The strategies outlined below will provide the core approaches to the development of such independence.

Pupils will have the opportunity to undertake:

- Leadership roles in curricular and organisational areas (eg group leader/class helper).
- Research activities utilising appropriate technologies.
- Self-correction of work.
- Personal organisational skills (eg self dress for PE, personal hygiene, organisation of personal resources).
- Role modelling (eg use of ICT equipment).

7 CLASSROOM ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT TO DEVELOP HIGH QUALITY LEARNING AND TEACHING

The class teacher will ensure an efficient and effective organisational system is secured within the classroom to facilitate high quality learning and teaching.

In order to do this, the teacher will regularly review practice to ensure a stimulating, well-planned environment in which the work of classroom assistants is maximised for the benefit of pupils. Children will work within a variety of ability groups and have easy access to appropriate resources as they follow an effective, well-planned curriculum.

There will be a smooth transition between lessons and activities. Good order and positive social-interaction will be encouraged. Effective use of time management and resources will play a crucial role in producing high quality learning and teaching in Brackenagh West School.

8 TEACHING STRATEGIES AND STYLES TO SECURE LEARNING

In order to secure learning across all identified intelligences and in a manner that will meet the learning styles of our pupils, we will encourage the use of drinking water as appropriate. Clear learning intentions will be communicated to the pupils as appropriate. We will engage with the children, encourage all to become involved, value their contributions and offer constructive, supportive feedback as required.

8.1 A wide range of teaching strategies will be employed which will include:

- Practical activities, group, paired and individual.
- Whole class activities.
- Problem-solving activities.
- Group discussion.
- Activity based sharing.
- Topic-based activities.
- Educational visits/visitors.
- Circle time.
- Differentiated questioning techniques.

8.2 These will be backed up by appropriate reinforcement. Realistic, high expectations in a variety of situations will be maintained. Activities will be well-paced and challenging. Our teaching strategies will also facilitate the early identification and support for children with learning difficulties.

9 STRATEGIES TO SECURE HIGH QUALITY LEARNING AND TEACHING FOR PUPILS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

As a school committed to developing all our pupils in an holistic manner, we recognise that all pupils are unique and develop at varying rates. We also appreciate that some pupils experience learning difficulties.

9.1 In order to cater effectively for these learners we will ensure:

- The implementation of a focused, diagnostic assessment system so as to identify pupils' learning needs as early as possible.
- The provision of appropriate staff training and development in order to secure the most effective teaching possible.
- The full implementation of the Code of Practice.
- Close liaison between school, home and outside agencies.
- The development of IEPs inclusive of SMART targets.
- The differentiation of the curriculum to meet the needs of all learners.
- Regular review of all our SEN procedures and practices.
- The implementation of appropriate support programmes for pupils/parents (eg Paired Reading etc.)

Throughout the application of all these strategies we will consistently focus on improving, developing and raising the self-esteem and attainment of our pupils.

10 STRATEGIES TO SECURE HIGH QUALITY LEARNING AND TEACHING FOR GIFTED AND TALENTED PUPILS

We will determine the needs of individual pupils and provide them with engaging, independent learning activities appropriate to their ability level, at the same time keeping them within their peer group to develop their own leadership skills and to provide them with the praise and reassurance that is necessary to nurture their talent.

10.1 In order to do this effectively we will:

- Utilise differentiated teaching approaches, and where appropriate 'setting', to support the learning needs of these pupils.
- Provide a wide range of activities across curricular and extra curricular areas so that such learners experience a breadth of engagement with learning.
- Utilise appropriate technologies and competitions to challenge and engage such learners.
- Maintain and communicate realistic, high expectations for such pupils.
- Ensure that such pupils are allocated appropriate roles and responsibilities in line with their ability and maturity (eg team leader, mentor for younger pupils/peers.)

11 TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING OF PUPILS' WORK TO SECURE SUSTAINED HIGH QUALITY LEARNING AND TEACHING

We believe that the assessment, recording and reporting of pupils' work has a key role to play in ensuring the sustained achievement of our pupils. We recognise that assessment should be varied, regular and consistent, and the outcomes should be utilised to inform future learning and teaching, as well as sharing progress with pupils, parents and relevant professionals (eg educational psychologist.)

11.1 The assessment, recording and reporting procedures utilised at Brackenagh West are kept under constant review so they are fit for purpose.

Currently we utilise:

- Levelling of Numeracy and Literacy.
- Teacher observation.
- Standardised tests.

We currently record assessment outcomes in:

- Pupils' books.
- Assessment Manager (SIMS).

- Pupils' reports (annual).
- Teachers' planners.

11.2 We report assessment outcomes via:

- Pupils' reports (annual).
- Parent/teacher meetings (annual).

This whole school approach to assessment, recording and reporting is designed to secure:

- Regular appropriate feedback to pupils, parents, co-ordinators and other professionals.
- Targets for future learning.
- An effective review of the success of the learning and teaching programmes implemented.
- The identification at class, year group, key stage and whole school levels of development opportunities for the school.

12 WHOLE SCHOOL MONITORING AND EVALULATION OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

As a self-evaluating school we recognise the need to consistently monitor our work and evaluate it against best practice.

We use a range of methods that we utilise to support this process and these include:

- Teachers' monitoring and evaluation of pupil performance.
- Teachers' self-evaluation/improvement which is facilitated by our PRSD system.
- Co-ordinators' monitoring and evaluation of planners and pupils' work.
- SMT's curriculum monitoring and evaluation.
- Principal's curriculum monitoring and evaluation.
- Annual action planning.
- School development planning.

13 POLICY REVIEW

The responsibility for the review of this policy rests with the Principal and the next review will be carried out in October 2014.