SPEAN BRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL
**LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY**

**Rationale**:
In 2002, The Scottish Executive published 5 national priorities: raising standards of achievement and attainment; providing a framework for learning; promoting inclusion and equality; developing values and citizenship; encouraging lifelong learning. The development of effective learning and teaching lies at the heart of each.  We believe in the concept of lifelong learning and through out teaching we aim to equip our pupils with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives

**Key principles**
 ➢ Learning and teaching will be inclusive and enjoyable
 ➢ Learning and teaching will meet the needs of the whole learner
 ➢ Learning and teaching will take account of multiple intelligence
 ➢ Learning and teaching will be flexible
 ➢ Learning and teaching will create lifelong learners who are active citizens.

**Aims:**
We believe that people learn in different ways. At our school we provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows pupils to develop skills and abilities to their full potential.
Through our teaching we aim to:
 ➢ Create an ethos of achievement to raise levels of attainment for all pupils
 ➢ Use the Curriculum for Excellence frameworks to ensure a coherent and progressive approach to learning and teaching
 ➢ Follow the principles and key characteristics within the Highland Learning and Teaching policy
 ➢ Enable our pupils to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners
 ➢ Foster pupils' self-esteem and help them to build positive relationships with people
 ➢ Show respect for all cultures and, in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people
 ➢ Develop pupils' self-respect and encourage pupils to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others

**Learning Environments**
We will create learning environments which:
• Create conditions which motivate all pupils to make sustained progress in learning within a common framework
• Provides equal opportunities for all pupils
• Are flexible in responding to pupils' academic, personal and social development
• Take account of pupils' different learning styles
• Make it clear that the achievements and progress of each pupil are valued
• Promote teaching which builds on the prior learning and attainments of pupils
• Free teachers to spend most of their time on direct teaching and enable pupils to work effectively on challenging tasks
• Are feasible and appropriate in terms of its expectations of teachers and pupils
• Promote praise and build positive attitudes to school and learning
• Encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning, reflecting on how they learn- what helps them learn and what makes it difficult to learn
• Are attractive and stimulating and display pupils' work


We offer  opportunities for pupils to learn in different ways. These include:
 ➢ Investigation and problem solving
 ➢ Research and finding out
 ➢ Group work
 ➢ Pair and trio work

- ➢ Independent work
- ➢ Whole class work
- ➢ Asking and answering questions
- ➢ Use of ICT
- ➢ Fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest
- ➢ Creative activities
- ➢ Watching television and responding to musical or tape-recorded material
- ➢ Debates, role-plays and oral presentations
- ➢ Designing and making things
- ➢ Participation in athletic or physical activity
- ➢ Participation in Citizenship and Enterprise activities

## Teaching approaches

Our teachers are the most important resource for learning available to the pupils and how her/his time is used is fundamental to effective learning and teaching. "What happens in the classroom determines the quality of a school….."

We use teaching approaches which:
- ➢ engage and stimulate the learner
- ➢ are varied to match learning needs and preferred styles of learning
- ➢ offer good quality interaction between staff and pupils
- ➢ allow for regular review of progress towards learning outcomes
- ➢ maximise opportunities to work directly with learners in whole class, group and individual situations
- ➢ embed ICT in the learning process
- ➢ promote positive social interactions

## Structure of Lessons

All lessons whether group or class will commence with sharing the learning outcomes/targets with the pupils. The bulk of the lesson will be direct teaching with differentiated follow up activities. There will be a plenary session or summing up of what has been learnt at the end of the lesson, whenever possible.

Teachers are at their most effective when teaching directly. We see direct teaching as being an effective teaching tool. Effective direct teaching includes the following features:
- Varied questioning of pupils and giving clear explanations in a range of contexts
- Listening and responding to pupils' answers and views
- Providing pupils with feedback and checking, through questioning, that teaching points have been well made and understood
- Sharing objectives/targets with pupils when setting tasks which motivate and challenge
- Monitoring the progress and pace of learning of individuals within groups
- Responding to individual needs by identifying next steps in learning

Direct teaching is effective in introducing and consolidating work.

Direct teaching carries with it a need to ensure that tasks undertaken by pupils are time-limited with a clear outcome expected at the end of that time.

## Forward planning

Our teachers' forward planning takes account of :
- ➢ Long-term (yearly), medium term (termly) and short term(weekly) planning
- ➢ prior learning and preferred learning styles e.g. visual, auditory, tactile/kinaesthetic
- ➢ multiple intelligences: visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic; logical/mathematical; bodily/kinaesthetic; musical/rhythmic; interpersonal; intrapersonal; spiritual
- ➢ setting targets/assessment criteria which specify what learners are expected to learn
- ➢ teacher activities, assessment evidence and resources that will be used to meet these targets
- ➢ evaluating what has been taught and identifying next steps for learning and teaching
- ➢ linking class-work and homework
- ➢ cross-curricular links

**Assessment**

Assessment in an integral part of the learning and teaching cycle. We undertake assessment that is:

➢ well matched to clearly identified purposes and encourages learners
➢ emphasises the formative, celebrating what has been achieved and identifying what has still to be achieved to progress
➢ an appropriate blend of self, peer and teacher review
➢ both formal and informal
➢ provides useful information which is shared with learners, and where appropriate, parents and other agencies.

**Allocation and organisation of time**

We plan our time flexibly taking account of recommendations in the Highland Council 'Flexibility in the Curriculum' document. We review our allocation of time to curricular areas annually to take account of priorities within the School Development Plan. Time allocation can also vary within stages and can be flexible to take account of the needs of specific pupils. Some areas of the curriculum are taught discretely e.g. Science, Technology but others are integrated.

**Organisation of Classes**

All our classes are mixed ability, and to cater for the needs of all we organise them in a variety of flexible ways:

Mixed ability grouping

In all areas of the curriculum the teachers organise by attainment groups or by mixed-ability grouping. The benefit of mixed ability groupings is that the presence of a range of abilities in the one classroom can allow pupils who are higher attainers in one area to work alongside and help those who are lower attainers in that area. We use working trios effectively in writing, reading and other curricular areas.

The more able pupils can serve as a model for others in the group/trio and an ethos of achievement can be fostered. It also allows pupils who are less academic but able in other areas of the curriculum opportunities to raise their achievement and self-esteem.

Managing differentiation in a class with a wide range of abilities makes demands on the teachers, and teachers need to present work in a way that motivates all pupils and keeps them usefully occupied on appropriate tasks. In order to accommodate this there will be no more than 3 teaching groups within a class whenever this is possible.

Individual

In all areas of the curriculum there are opportunities for aspects of individual learning but this is often appropriate for able pupils and pupils with specific needs, particularly those with Individual Educational Plans. Teachers will plan and implement in collaboration with Support for Learning team, a suitable learning and teaching programme for pupils with I.E.P.s. Able pupils may be provided with individual extension activities but at all times especially in the Upper school pupils will be given opportunities to work individually e.g. in research work, giving presentations/talks etc.

**Physical Organisation of Classrooms**

Our classrooms are set up to encourage independent use of resources/materials and equipment. We set and display group targets with an emphasis on what the pupils will learn and we have wall pockets that contain specific targets for the individual pupils. All classrooms have an achievement walls for displaying work, and systems for promoting achievement and raising of self-esteem are carried out in all classrooms e.g. rewards, points, nominations for 'Star Assemblies', Citizenship awards etc.

**Partnership with Parents**

Parents are informed of aspects of our Learning and Teaching e.g. grouping etc. in our School Prospectus. Priorities in the School Development Plan and how they will be implemented within the classes are discussed with the School Board and parents are kept informed of any changes in practice via newsletter and/or Parents Meetings. We hold workshops to demonstrate methodologies/strategies being employed within the school. Parents are audited for their views on aspects of learning and teaching when the school reviews aspects of the School Development Plan.

**Continuing Professional Development of staff**
All staff undergo the above and reflect on the impact of their professional development on their learning and teaching by maintaining a CPD profile and portfolio.
We use the Highland Council Learning and Teaching Toolkit to support individual and whole school learning and teaching priorities. (electronic version on www.highlandschools-virtual.org.uk in Assurance Webs.)

**Resources**
We have a bank of varied resources to support learning and teaching and these are reviewed regularly to ensure they are relevant and appropriate. Resources for different curricular areas are included in our school policies.

**Role of Support for Learning**
The Support for Learning team, Learning Support Auxiliary and Classroom Assistant play a significant role in supporting the school in all aspects of learning and teaching. Collaboration of planning and teaching aims to meet all pupils' needs.

**Monitoring and review of practice**
The Learning and Teaching at the school is related to our school aims and our School Development Plan. We use the Quality Indicators in 'How Good Is Our School' to evaluate our learning and teaching. It is reviewed in light of national priorities, findings of Quality Assurance Reports, HMI inspections, monitoring and review of practice. Classroom practice is monitored by Head Teacher  and attainment levels are tracked and monitored by head Teacher on a termly basis. We also track pupil progress in aspects of the curriculum. These help to inform us of the effectiveness of our learning and teaching within the school. Teachers are beginning to undergo self-evaluation to evaluate the effectiveness of their classroom practice.
We take account of reviewing learning and teaching methods to ensure they are still relevant when we are reviewing our School Policies or auditing aspects of the School Development Plan.
(See Quality Assurance and monitoring policy for further information)