



Cranborne Middle School

Teaching and Learning Policy

“Learning is what I remember after I’ve forgotten what I was taught.” Albert Einstein

The staff and governors of Cranborne Middle School believe that learning is at the heart of everything we do. This document sets out to identify our collective beliefs about how pupils learn best, and provide a clear direction for our work together. This will ensure everyone is aware of how we can achieve our goal to develop independent life-long learners.

Through this policy we aim to:

- ◆ define what ‘learning’ is
- ◆ improve the effectiveness of pupil learning throughout the school
- ◆ provide guidance on aspects of teaching that promote learning
- ◆ raise standards of attainment and progress across the school
- ◆ provide an agreed framework for monitoring teaching and learning

Definitions of Learning

“The principle goal of education is to create men and women who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what other generations have done.” Jean Piaget

Learning is a complicated, occasionally frustrating, but ultimately rewarding process. It is difficult to sum up what learning is in one simple statement, so we have gathered together our different definitions of learning which are listed below:

Learning is...

- ◆ Being better able to solve problems as an individual or part of a team
- ◆ Application of knowledge
- ◆ Gradually gaining a deeper understanding from where you were
- ◆ Skills dependent
- ◆ Driven by purpose
- ◆ Finding things out for yourself
- ◆ Making mistakes and learning from them
- ◆ The evolution of ideas and thought processes
- ◆ Different for every child
- ◆ Challenging
- ◆ An acquisition of a purposeful behaviour which leads to a desired achievement
- ◆ Something that can happen unexpectedly in a moment
- ◆ Understanding and applying what has been learned in different subjects and situations
- ◆ Happening more than we think

As learning is such a personal and complex process, we need to understand how different children learn. We can then provide lessons where pupils have the opportunity to learn in different, stimulating and challenging ways.

There are also many opportunities for learning to take place outside the classroom, developing the whole child’s social, moral and spiritual well-being. All adults linked to the school are involved in our

pupils' education, from every staff member, to parents or visitors to the school. Through the wealth of extra-curricular activities, extra responsibilities, and exciting opportunities available, we will ensure that learning at Cranborne Middle School is as meaningful and effective as possible.

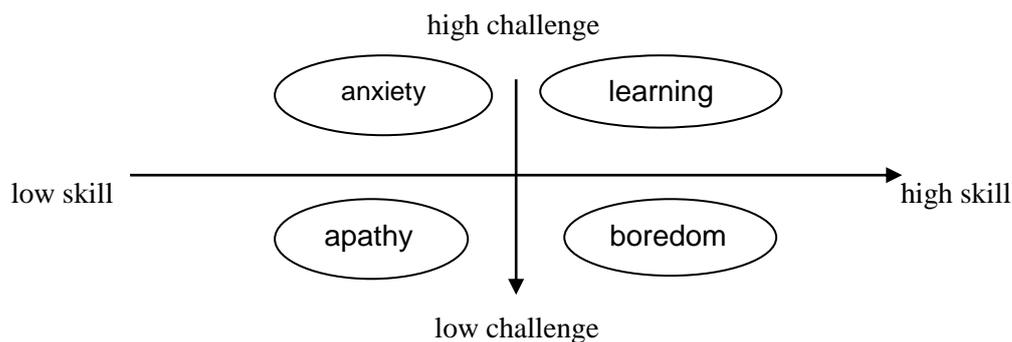
How do pupils learn effectively?

According to Dewey, a distinguished researcher of learning:

“Give the pupils something to do, not something to learn. And the doing is of such a nature as to demand thinking. Learning, naturally, results.”

Maximising learning potential

Pupils make most progress when the challenge in a lesson is high, and they have the necessary skills to allow them to achieve success.



We then need to consider the ways that pupils learn best in order to start to unpick what environment and types of lessons we ought to be providing for our classes.

Children learn best when...

- ◆ They feel confident and comfortable in their environment
- ◆ Their own questions provide the direction of learning and open further challenges or questions
- ◆ They are encouraged and supported
- ◆ They question what they are learning
- ◆ They can see the purpose and future benefits of what they are learning
- ◆ They can discuss chosen routes or methods
- ◆ There is a mixture of routine and surprise
- ◆ There are clear expectations and boundaries
- ◆ We listen to them
- ◆ They are intrinsically motivated
- ◆ They feel valued
- ◆ They make links to real life
- ◆ They cooperate with each other
- ◆ They feel a sense of achievement at overcoming a challenge
- ◆ They are inspired by how the topic is to be learnt
- ◆ They listen, take part, have a go
- ◆ Learning differences are understood and planned for

Teaching to maximise learning

Although pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning, lessons need careful planning and organising based on the learning needs of the individuals you are teaching. Teachers should plan carefully how to use ESAs, group work, and different levels of intervention to maximise the progress of all pupils. All resources available to staff should be used to maximum effect, and selected carefully to ensure that learning is enhanced as a result.

Assessment for Learning underpins our on-going assessment of pupil progress – see separate policy.

Personal Learning and Thinking Skills are integrated into schemes of work and lessons to form an integral part of teaching and learning. The six groups of skills are: independent enquirers, creative thinkers, reflective learners, team workers, self-managers and effective participants. These skills need to be explicitly taught, practiced in new and unfamiliar areas, and reinforced over time. Opportunities for developing PLTS can arise both in and out of the classroom and help our pupils become successful learners for life.

Finally, encouraging a growth mindset in our students, as opposed to a fixed mindset, underpins our learning ethos. In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment. Students who embrace growth mindsets—the belief that they can learn more or become smarter if they work hard and persevere—may learn more, learn it more quickly, and view challenges and failures as opportunities to improve their learning and skills¹. All staff who work with our pupils encourage the development of a growth mindset by supporting the attitude that effort is the most important factor in how well you learn.

Raising attainment across the school

Through our shared understanding of what learning is, and how we can work together as a team to develop the quality of teaching at Cranborne, we will be able to maximise progress and attainment over the four years pupils spend at our school. Pupils will be encouraged to be self-motivated, aspire to achieve challenging targets and celebrate their own successes and progress.

Monitoring and developing teaching and learning

Teaching and learning will be monitored through various channels, including Performance Management, subject reviews, learning walks and SLT monitoring, tracking data and governor subject reviews. Through our induction programme for NQTs, team teaching, mentoring and coaching, staff reflect upon their own teaching styles, and continue to develop strategies that maximise pupil learning. Consultants, external courses and INSET days impact upon teaching and learning in the school by providing Continuing Professional Development for staff, enhancing their understanding of how to best provide for the individuals they teach.

Monitoring the success of the policy

The Senior Leadership Team and Governors will ratify the policy, and the contents and effectiveness of the policy will be reviewed every 12 months to ensure it remains relevant and reflects the teaching and learning that takes place in the school.

Reviewed July 2017

Full Governing Body Meeting 11.10.17

¹ Sourced from Carol Dweck, 'Mindset: How you can fulfil your potential'.