

**ECHT SCHOOL**

**LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY**

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 **1) Rationale and Aims**

The aim of this policy is to provide guidance to all staff regarding a coherent approach to learning and teaching throughout all the stages of the school.

This policy links to the following articles from the UNCRC (UN Convention for the Rights of the Child).

* Article 3 (best interests of the child) The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children
* Article 2 (non-discrimination)
* Article 12 (respect for the views of the child
* Article 28 (right to education)
* Article 29 (goals of education)

At Echt we believe that the individual child is at the centre of the learning process and relationships between staff and pupils should be based on mutual respect and dignity:

Children learn through all their experiences and learn in different ways. What and how we teach at Echt, recognises and complements this. Our responsibility as educators is to prepare our young people for the future with the necessary skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

We promote this through our school values.

R**ESPECT TEAMPLAYER INDEPENDENT SELF-BELIEF INCLUDED CREATIVE**

**Our vision is ‘E**veryone **C**reative and **H**appy **T**ogether’

 As a staff, we aim to provide an education which promotes the following:

 OUR SCHOOL AIMS

* Challenge our pupils to be **creative** thinkers
* Promote wellbeing, **self-belief** and mutual **respect**
* Work **together** as a whole school communityand celebrate success
* Provide opportunities for everyone to feel **included** and achieve their best.
* Promote **independence** by encouraging leadership and responsibility
* Value sustainability and social justice, locally and globally

We monitor the quality of the learning and teaching at Echt School through reference to quality indicators outlined in ‘How Good is Our School 4?’ and the principles of GIRFEC (Getting It Right For Every Child).

**2) Planning**

At Echt, we are continually reviewing and developing our planning processes. Planning is currently structured in the following ways:

Long term planning

At Echt we have an updated curriculum based on the UN Sustainability Goals 2030 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We operate a three-year rolling programme during which pupils explore a progression of experiences and outcomes across a range of themes which are whole school.

Medium term planning

Teachers use a range of methods including thinking routines and talking tubs to plan with the pupils. Possible lines of development (PLODS) as well as Big Questions are then generated and incorporated into teachers plans. Plans including experiences and outcomes (Es and Os), benchmarks for assessment, learning intentions and assessment evidence are then created on a termly basis for the core areas; reading, writing, maths and health and wellbeing.

 Short term planning

Teachers currently use a combination of daily and weekly plans which include:

* The learning intention for each lesson
* The activities which will take place including, if relevant: differentiation; resources; key vocabulary or questions to be shared and plenary
* Next steps and notes which inform future planning.

 Whilst careful planning is important, staff at Echt recognise the importance of flexibility to allow for spontaneity, running with pupils’ interests and/or altering plans according to need.

**3) Learning and Teaching Styles**

 All individuals learn in different ways, and teachers have a number of different teaching styles. This adds to the uniqueness of each class and learning experience for the children who need to be equipped with social skills for dealing with the variety of personalities they will encounter during their lives.

 At Echt the teaching and non-teaching staff make an effort to ensure that:

* A range of learning styles are given due consideration when planning and undertaking activities with children
* Learning is an active process for children
* There is a suitable balance of class, group and individual teaching based on the needs of the children in their classes
* There are opportunities for collaborative work, promoting the key skills of listening and talking and having respect for the opinions of others
* Thinking skills, thinking routines and problem solving are taught across all curriculum areas
* Children develop independent learning skills and are involved in setting their own targets and self-evaluation through learning conversations with the teacher
* Processes are modelled for the pupils
* A range of open and closed questioning is used, allowing thinking time for children to respond
* Pupils are kept focused and engaged by:

-The classroom environment

- Varying learning environments eg outdoor learning, external visits, use of other schools and community facilities

- Taking brain breaks

- Physical involvement or exercise

- Making learning as interactive as possible

- Encouraging pupils to drink plenty of water

 - Paying attention to classroom behaviour management needs (see Positive Relationships

 Policy).

 **4) Marking and Feedback**

How children’s work is received and marked and the nature of feedback given to them will have a direct bearing on learning attitudes and future achievements.

Reasons for marking and feedback

* To recognise, encourage and reward pupils’ efforts and achievement, and celebrate success
* To provide a dialogue between staff and pupils about strengths and areas for improvement in their work
* To improve children’s confidence in reviewing their own work and setting future targets, by indicating ‘next steps’ in learning
* To indicate how a piece of work could be improved against agreed assessment criteria
* To help pupils develop an awareness of what they need to improve in order to reach the next level in the 3-18 curriculum
* To identify pupils who need additional support or more challenging work
* To inform curriculum planning.

Whole school approach

 1) The learning intention of each lesson is shared with the pupil.

 2) Teachers have the freedom to choose how to share their learning intentions and the timing of the introduction into the activity.

 3) Pupils’ work is marked in such a way that achievement is acknowledged and teaching points, if necessary, are highlighted.

 4) Marking or feedback (written or oral) is linked directly to learning intentions.

 5) Wherever possible, marking takes place with the children in order to provide instant feedback and accelerate the pupil onto the next step or the more challenging task.

6) When marking is undertaken at a distance teachers must ensure that pupils can read and understand the written comments and that time is allowed afterwards for pupils to read and reflect on the marking.

8) When a pupil produces written work, care must be taken not to overload spelling corrections or grammar corrections.

9) An agreed marking code is under discussion.

10) Staff other than the class teacher should initial any work they have marked or for which they have provided feedback.

11) Where appropriate, staff should mark work as a whole class or group activity, e.g. in maths whereby pupils mark their own work whilst supervised by an adult.

13) Pupils should regularly self and peer- assess but this process should be modelled by the teacher in order that it is effective.

 **5) Assessment**

 Assessment is an ongoing and integral part of all learning and teaching. Pupils are encouraged to engage with self and peer evaluation, and to set new targets for future learning. Although a range of professionals and supporters are encouraged to become involved with the assessment process, the class teacher maintains overall responsibility for class, group and individual attainment tracking. In order to facilitate this process in a meaningful and consistent manner, school and cross establishment moderation is essential. This will ensure progression is monitored and can then inform the direction of future developments.

Standardised assessment

The Scottish Government assesses reading, writing and numeracy in P1,P4 and P7 by means of an online, adaptive assessment – Scottish National Standardised Assessment (SNSA). The results are recorded in the school tracking system. Areas of strength and weakness are analysed and acted upon by teaching staff and may inform school improvement.

At Echt, Progress in Maths and New group Reading Assessments and Schonell Spelling are also used to assess all pupils from P1 to P7 at the end and/or start of each academic year. Similarly, these are used as diagnostic tools to inform teaching and learning.

At designated points through a school session, the Head Teacher and staff will review written work e.g. jotters, profiles in Book Creators, writing assessments as part of the Quality Assurance process.

Other types of assessment

Teachers will also use a wide range of assessment evidence to inform achievement of a level, next steps and future planning. This may include for example; observation, written notes/evaluations, end of unit assessments, holistic assessments or practical activities. These assessments should demonstrate breadth, challenge and application and judgements should be made against the benchmarks.

**6) Additional Support Needs**

* Pupils with an identified need may have access to support from Additional Support for Learning teachers (ASL), Pupil Support Assistants, English as an Additional Language teacher, Traveller Support teacher, Intervention and Prevention teacher and Pupil Support Worker as appropriate.
* Staff use a range of observation and assessment to identify need and liaise with other staff and external agencies such as the Educational Psychology Service or the Speech and Language service as appropriate.
* Tasks are carefully matched to individual need and planning reflects this, through differentiation and use of appropriate resources.
* Planning undertaken by teachers considers needs outlined in Individualised Education Programmes (IEPs) or Multi Agency Action Plans (MAAP).
* Teachers will plan activities, tasks and levels of challenge to ensure that all pupils are supported in their learning, including those who are capable of learning beyond the expectations of their age and stage.

 10) Partnership with Parents and the Wider Community

* Echt School continues to develop partnership through open communication with parents and carers concerning aspects of what is taught and how, e.g. weekly bulletin, open afternoons, parents’ evenings, displays, homework letters, workshops, etc.
* Parents are encouraged to assist their children with homework and are given advice through termly letters from each class.
* Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) disclosure checked volunteers are welcomed to assist with learning activities where interest and demand exists.
* Opportunities are made whenever possible to link project and school work to activities and organisations within the local community.

11) Improving Learning and Teaching

Learning and teaching requires continuous work and commitment from school staff to refine, modify and improve activities and techniques. Every year all teaching staff:

* Undertake a minimum of 35 hours continuous professional development (CPD) on a pro-rata basis
* Meet with the Head Teacher to discuss CPD work undertaken
* Participate in activities agreed through Collegiate Activity Time to undertake whole school developments aimed at improving aspects of school including learning and teaching processes
* Periodically self-evaluate progress against the school improvement plan priorities
* Receive feedback about their practice through classroom monitoring by the Head Teacher
* Provide and seek informal advice and support from other teachers to improve the quality of learning experiences for their children
* Ensure progression between classes, stages and establishments through effective transitional dialogue and documentation
* Develop their awareness and knowledge of new and current local and national initiatives aimed at improving learning and teaching in schools.
* The Head Teacher, through activities outlined in the Quality Assurance calendar, ensures that further improvements in learning and teaching are a key part of their remit and responsibilities.