

Teaching and Learning Policy
Sedlescombe C. E. Primary School

September 2015

EVERY CHILD MATTERS.
TOGETHER WE ENJOY LEARNING.
TOGETHER WE ACHIEVE.
TOGETHER WE SUCCEED.

**At Sedlescombe CE Primary School we
aspire to give our children the best
opportunities possible through
'Outstanding' teaching and learning.**

**In order to achieve this in all lessons, we
focus on the following areas:**

- **Engagement of all children**
- **Teacher Subject Knowledge**
- **Pace of teaching**
- **Differentiation**
- **Challenge for All Children**
- **Assessment for Learning Strategies**
- **Strong Learning Environments**

**Appendix A = Managing children with
challenging behaviours and/or with
Attachment difficulties.**

ENGAGEMENT OF CHILDREN

We use a variety of the following strategies to engage all children in their learning:

- Attention grabbing starters to begin lessons
- Good pace of learning/lessons, stick to timings e.g. 30 seconds does not turn into 3 minutes.
- Using a range of strategies e.g. whiteboards, talk partners, phone a friend, lolly sticks, 80:20 rule of children doing / teacher talk.
- Teacher talk carefully used to keep children engaged
- Vary delivery of lessons
- Short sharp sessions
- Humour, fun
- Good use of reward systems e.g. stickers, raffle tickets, behaviour charts etc
- Imaginative & creative learning in class, e.g. role play
- Use TSS to refocus children during whole class inputs (using visual cards, visual support on whiteboards)
- Teacher to vary the tone and volume of voice and speak with passion, fun and enthusiasm
- Cover VAK in all lessons - different ways to engage the children visually, to be hands on and interesting.
- Use a variety of ways of recording work and scaffolding to support learning
- Use of Brain breaks (brain gym / concentration activities) to help refocus children
- Good use of pre prepared Interactive Whiteboard pages to engage children and support learning.
- Motivational charts devised for individual pupils to support improvements in behaviour and/or learning
- Referring to the strategies outlined in Appendix A, managing children with challenging behaviours
- High quality modelling by staff

TEACHER SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE

We have a high expectation of all teachers having strong subject knowledge for all areas of the curriculum that they teach.

This will enable them to:

- Ask probing questions to get children thinking and voicing their ideas – applying the knowledge to real life situations to show understanding.
- Being able to link subjects and making good opportunities of cross curricular learning
- Teach at right level and ensure more than expected progress
- Understand and use correct terminology for all subjects and expect children to use this correctly
- Be confident to say to children that they don't know and check on the answer.

Teachers and TSS to be involved in appropriate CPD to further enhance subject knowledge

PACE

In our lessons we expect a good pace, which is not necessarily moving quickly, but that children have sufficient time to develop and secure their learning and time is not wasted.

This is achieved through:

- Use of a range of strategies to keep children involved. e.g.: whiteboards, talk partners, lolly sticks, questioning and effective use of time
- Strong planning to outline lesson starter, activities, plenaries
- Resources ready beforehand so teaching and learning time is not wasted.
- Split starters where appropriate between Teacher and TAs
- Clear organisational procedures in class which children know well and follow (e.g. use of whiteboards)
- Enthusiastic and exciting delivery by teacher
- 80/20 split as a guide (less teacher talk)
- Work that is matched well to the children's abilities.
- Engaging ways to get children's attention e.g. singing "are you listening", clapping, use of shaker/bell
- High expectations when listening to adults and moving around classroom.
- Strong and consistent behaviour management allowing lessons to keep a good pace so that poor behaviour does not disturb teaching and learning.
- Mini plenaries used during lessons to enhance learning and refocus children.

DIFFERENTIATION

In our lessons we ensure that all children are able to achieve the learning outcome and make progress at their own level through carefully planned differentiation.

We use different strategies to achieve this:

- Good prior knowledge of all children's abilities to support clear differentiated planning
- A range of strategies to differentiate teaching and learning e.g. adult support, different tasks, writing frames, use of resources, peer support
- Developing independence in learning through high quality differentiation not just adult support
- Effective teacher questioning skills to challenge all abilities
- TSS to know which group they are teaching and the focus of the learning.
- Use of support materials for SEN children (maths packs, word books etc)
- Use of Clicker 6 to support SEN children with their writing
- Extension activities/challenge available for all ability groups
- A variety of recording techniques e.g. mind mapping, writing frames, scaffolded sheets
- A variety of groupings to suit the task e.g. ability groups, mixed ability, gender groups

CHALLENGE FOR ALL CHILDREN

We use a variety of strategies to enable all children to challenge themselves and be challenged to make more than expected progress.

These include:

- Use of growth mindset areas
- Children to have a choice of different levels of tasks
- Challenge corners
- Extension tasks pitched at correct abilities – modelled well
- Open ended problems
- Effective differentiation
- Possibility to extend their learning and be challenged further outside of school
- Mini challenges overnight
- Opportunity to scaffold to ensure successful challenge
- Learning environment that encourages challenge and development (see below)
- Timed tasks – high expectations of all children of what needs to be achieved by end of lesson
- In whole class teaching, display differentiated questions for children to have a go at, especially in maths
- Setting of SMART targets for individual children where necessary e.g. on IEP
- Focus on progress and know children well, know the end of year targets for children
- Maths activity sheets in 3 parts: a) rule of 6 questions only
b) problem solving activities c) challenge/extension

AfL

We are fully committed to using the following strategies for Assessment of Learning in all lessons to ensure more than expected progress.

These are:

- Assessment of prior learning to ensure LI are challenging and also fit progression and learning
- Sharing the ‘short’ Learning intention and learning outcome with children in child friendly language. Refer frequently to the LI/LO during the lesson.
- Give the children the big picture to make the learning relevant to them
- High level teacher and TSS questioning to assess understanding to adjust input / future planning or groupings. (Most questions to be open ended)
- Use of whiteboards to assess children’s understanding as the lesson progresses to adjust input, adult support or groupings.
- Strong modelling of tasks so children know what learning outcome they are aspiring to achieve
- Success criteria generated by the children with the teacher and referred to throughout lesson and plenary (mostly)
- Success criteria visual throughout the session and stuck in books to refer to when needed e.g. writing in literacy and some maths tasks (or written in books by children)
- Staff modelling the use of the SC with the children
- Mini plenaries during activity time to refocus on success criteria, adjust adult support or clarify misconceptions
- High quality peer and self-assessment
- Progression through units is clear and lessons are adapted to developing needs of children
- Teacher moving round the classroom to check in on children’s learning, to assess children’s progress, as well as bringing children together to teach and add in challenge
- Effective marking and feedback to move learning forward (see marking policies) - work is marked daily

STRONG LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

We believe our learning environments should be tidy, stimulating, organised and respected. They must be refreshed/renewed regularly.

Each classroom should have:

- Tidy teachers desk area
- Displays from the ceiling to support teaching and learning
- Good use of windows / external doors for display to support teaching and learning
- Music playing at the beginning of the morning and afternoon and other suitable times to facilitate a calm and focused approach to teaching and learning
- Displays to support key literacy learning
- Numeracy display to support key maths learning
- Always success criteria displayed visually to remind children of non-negotiable expectations in standards of presentation
- Stars of the week displayed outside classrooms to value children's achievements
- Tidy desks with well-equipped trays to include: writing pencils, colouring pencils, rulers, scissors, handwriting pens (where appropriate), pritt stick, dictionary, word mats and a container for rubbers
- Entrance to classroom displaying project theme
- Table or group names linked to the project theme
- Focal point somewhere in the classroom displaying the project theme e.g. wall display, artefacts and objects, books, a themed corner
- Screensaver reflective of theme on interactive whiteboards

Appendix A: Managing children with challenging behaviours and/or with Attachment difficulties:

Some successful strategies to follow:

In our classes there are, on average, around 2 children with very challenging behaviour that requires a high level of input to support them in making some positive changes over time, as well as being able to lessen the disruption they cause in the classroom and/or in the playground. It is worthwhile investing time with these children early on. This can only be a positive action, and could reap benefits for the rest of the class and the staff team, term by term throughout the year.

1. Teacher/child relationship: non-negotiable

Getting to know the child as an individual is very important, this requires some dedicated 1:1 time. Teacher to spend some 1:1 times with the child, find out about child's family, hobbies, special interests such as football team they support/formula 1 racing, out of school clubs the child belongs to, what they are good at, what they find difficult in school and out of school, what they do at weekends..... This can be done, for example, over a few 10 minute chat times at the beginning of lunchtimes for KS2, or at afternoon play for KS1 for example. Teacher to talk with the child every Monday about their weekend, and tell the child something you have done at the weekend too – this need only take 2/3 minutes yet it starts the week positively with the child knowing you care about them, think about them and are interested in them. They grow to know, and enjoy, this routine usually. Other chats, as and when, are good too.

Suggestion: For a very difficult child, note things down into a special book about the child, and create a scrap book (does not need to be top quality). Child can add to this at home, and bring it in to show you. The child, together with the teacher/TA, can create an attractive cover which is covered with tacky-back, to keep it looking good. Teacher could find time to meet 1:1 with the child once a week for 5-10 minutes once you have got to know the child really well, just to chat and talk through the scrap book. It is helpful if you tell the child when it will be from week to week and write it down in their book; teacher to look ahead in his/her diary to find the right time.

2. Keep the child in mind out of school hours: non-negotiable:

When chatting with the child on a Monday tell them you were thinking about them over the weekend/evening.., this strategy is powerful as it helps the children enormously to know you were keeping them in mind out of school hours.

Suggestion: Find a picture for the child to go into their special book over a weekend or evening – i.e. about their hobbies, what they are good at... give it to the child to stick in their book when you meet 1:1. Keeping the child in mind helps a child enormously – say 'I was thinking about you when I saw this picture, so I cut it out for you/ bought this postcard/ found this photo..... as I know you like trains (or whatever!)

3. Classroom seating/resources/support – a range of strategies to go through: non-negotiable:

Check: Is the child sitting in the best place in the classroom, facing you, near you to do a thumbs up/smile/frown etc. easily without even saying their name...? If they are

sitting on the carpet are they in the best place e.g. on the outside, near a good role model, or maybe sitting on a chair instead?
Have they got personal space that they need?

Is the child sitting in the best group, working with the right children?
Has the child got a 'learning break' card if it might be helpful to them (make one if necessary, a morning one, and an afternoon one...)? Is there an agreed space for the child to use for his/her learning break with some appropriate resources for the child? You may need to set up a small box of easy resources.

Does the child need their own workstation in class?

Does the child need their own set of resources to avoid squabbles/conflict?

Has the child got a classroom responsibility/job to do? (This can be very important and effective). This increases self-esteem and they feel valued by the teacher.

Do not let your children choose partners/teams for PE, other lessons/games – teacher organises these to avoid a child being left until last... if this happens this is harmful and it might well be the challenging child that is left until last.

Choose your 'battles' – do not try to focus on improving everything about the child.

Firstly note down all the areas of concern. Then select one area to focus on at a time, and discuss this with the child as being a target for the next week/2 weeks. Keep your list and date it when you are addressing one area – evidence is crucial and a record.

For these challenging children, one strategy that can work well if it is really maintained as a high focus by you, is to make a behaviour chart for this agreed target area for the week, or 2 weeks (just one target) – and tell all classroom staff, MDSAs and other staff what the focus is so that all staff can know and support the child. (Put up a post it on the staff noticeboard). Personalise the behaviour chart to the child – e.g. a football chart with the logo of their favourite team on it, their favourite animal etc. If possible create the chart with the child. (Is the recording going to be smiley faces or scores.... Clarity is crucial for the child and staff.) Involve parents too, perhaps they could have a home chart to link in with the school target if applicable. Keep the behaviour charts for evidence, make sure they are dated.

Send child at Happy Time to show progress with the behaviour chart to the Head Teacher – celebrate even the smallest improvements and successes big time! Send praise note home to parents/carers.

4. Contact with parents/carers: non-negotiable:

Teachers are to communicate with the parents/carers by email, phone calls, home/school contact book or regular meetings. A meeting can take place for Rec/KS1 teachers during end of the day storytime, and for KS2 teachers after school if necessary. A regular meeting time especially for Reception/KS1 may be necessary e.g. once a fortnight for 15 minutes (best not to make it longer than that period in between meetings). Set the next meeting and confirm it via email, phone or in the home-school book afterwards. Always begin conversations with positives about the child and end it with positives. Share the concerns carefully and clearly, and explain about targeting one area at a time, share the behaviour charts etc. You may wish to bring the child into this meeting too.

If you suspect the parent/carers may be difficult, you will need your TA present who can support you about the difficulties as well as saying positives about the child; teacher will need to organise how to cover the class for this meeting.

Teacher is to try all possible strategies that will keep a good working relationship with the parents/carers. The meetings, phonecalls, emails or the home-school books are all good ways to keep communication going. Write in the book daily or almost daily – even just a small comment is fine.

Suggestion: set up a home/school book to record daily notes for these most vulnerable children (remember this is only for 2 children generally) – always include

positives as well as the difficulties to inform parents/carers. Ask them to let you know how things have been at home too. (For the really difficult child(ren) vulnerable to exclusion or with outside agency support, this becomes a non-negotiable. This is good evidence too.)

If meetings progress to be very difficult, they will need to include the Head Teacher. Parent/carers meetings need to be noted down on the child's PSHE record: the date and time + key points as necessary.

Having the parents/carers email addresses of the most vulnerable children are useful and, in this day and age, an efficient and effective method, of informing the parents/carers of any changes to the timetable or if a supply teacher is going to be teaching the class in advance, so that the parents/carers can also support and prepare the child at home, send them confirmation of meetings. (This has worked incredibly well in one class, and been a very positive action by the class teacher, as well as greatly appreciated by the parents. Keep the emails as evidence.)

5. Strategies to use with child are non-negotiables – strategies to use:

Wondering aloud strategy:

When a child makes a wrong choice, do not ask the child 'why did you do that?' 'what made you do that?' These types of questions are pointless and the child usually says 'I don't know' or blames someone else.

Use the wondering aloud technique (read page 87 from 'Inside I'm hurting' book) – teacher to lead the conversation "I am wondering if you forgot the target you are working on this week..." or "I am wondering if you were feeling angry about something?" or "I am wondering if the work was too hard/easy for you?" or "I am wondering if I forgot to remind you about your target this morning" or "I am wondering if you are feeling tired today?" or "I am wondering if I did not explain that so well to you" etc. Give an opening for the child to respond to and take this forward into a conversation. Taking some blame (in the eyes of the child) can help the child too.

It is important to physically sit down to talk with the child, so that you are at the same level as them and not towering over them.

Teacher and Teaching Assistant's body language and facial expressions are really important, as well as keeping calm and consistent – being disappointed is a good way to tackle the problem. Be fully aware of the tone of voice used by the staff, as this can instantly make a child aggressive/angry and can make the situation worse; keeping a quiet and calm voice yet ensuring you are firm and fair regarding the wrong choice can work best for most vulnerable children. Try to include 'I still like you but I am so disappointed in your wrong choice that is why I am feeling sad/cross. I wonder how I can help you better and you can remember your target better?'

There are times when a strong, firm, direct voice can work for a certain type of child too. For some children, this approach creates conflict and anxiety in a child, resulting in greater issues.

Explicit language strategy:

Use explicit language with the child – do not say 'be kind' but rather 'touch the others gently, they feel uncomfortable when you push them', or do not say 'stop shouting' but rather 'talk quietly to others, it gives children a shock when you shout at them' (see page 52 from 'Inside I'm hurting'.) The clearer we are with what the child needs to stop and how to put this right, the more success the child can have and will have.

Commentary strategy:

Using commentaries is a useful strategy to verbalise what is happening or has happened. The learning break strategy is a good one for an INA or TA to do with a

child – an INA can work with any children in the class do remember that. The teacher could say ‘I can see you have lots of energy right now, I think a learning break is needed for 5 minutes, so that you can run round the sports area 5 times (or whatever is right to suggest for that child) and use up some of your energy.’ The INA or TA goes out with the child

with the timer, yet talks to the child along the lines of: ‘You have used up a lot of energy, well done! In a minute we are going to go back into the class and we are going to carry on with the number work (or whatever the learning is). We’re nearly there. Just through this door, and up the stairs. We need to get ready to use our thinking now. I know that you have had a good break so you will be much more able to get your thinking back and try your best. OK, we are back in class. Let’s look, where did you get up to?’ This is one example of the ‘commentary’ strategy, this is so powerful. (See page 95 from ‘Inside I’m hurting.’)

Classroom work strategies:

Give choices: “You need to sit either by Ruth or by Mrs. Smith, which one?” Ensure both choices are fine by the teacher/teaching assistant. Say ‘thank you’, or ‘well done, good choice’

“To do this piece of work you can either use your sharp pencil, or this special pen”. (Read page 230 from ‘Inside I’m hurting’.)

Mark in the child’s book how much you expect the children to achieve – highlight the number of lines, write down how many questions..... Give praise/rewards for success. Be really explicit and praise lots.

6. Successful endings: good practice:

For some children (generally Rec/KS1 children) : when it is getting close to the ending of an activity, or playtime... something the child is enjoying yet you know they will not cope well with the ending, on a 1:1 basis that child will need a time warning communicated to them verbally (not by calling out in front of the class), but by a staff member bending/sitting down at their level to make eye contact and tell the child how many minutes are left and setting up a sand timer of the minutes left is helpful.

Using a memory card is another way of coping with an ending – take a small card and write ‘Alex has not yet finished his lego tower’, if there can be time found later to finish it. It is very frustrating for anyone to stop and break up an activity that is not yet finished, it is very hurtful, frustrating and upsetting - often creating anger within a child. Taking photos of the model and/or the activity is a good idea, especially if it has to be put away, broken up... the Teacher or Teaching Assistant must remember to print the photo to give to the child later that day to take home or put in their special book.

7. Coping with change: non-negotiable:

Preparing vulnerable children (in fact, the whole class) for change is crucial – a change in lesson routine, change of teacher – yet always highlight explicitly what is staying the same. Every day in school we start the morning and afternoon with the register, have playtimes at more or less the same times, always have lunchtime, Rec/KS1 generally finish with a story/songs, children sit on the carpet or at their same table places ... so although routine goes sometimes, highlight the ‘routine’ that stays. Even if a supply teacher is coming in, prepare the children yet highlight (over highlight!) what is staying the same. By doing this, it reassures children of what is

staying the same which lessens the negative impact of the things that are different. This is hugely successful. (Instead of saying 'we are out of routine and the children are all over the place' - which the children often overhear, sense - and therefore they will fulfil your expectations, say 'some things are a little different today, yet we still have lots of things the same (be really explicit about what is the same, show this clearly on your visual timetable), so that is good news for us all.' (Do not forget to email or communicate to the parents/carers of significant changes, yet also highlight what is staying the same.)

8. Outside agency support and other support systems available:

Suggestions:

- A) Referrals (ESBAS form on server) can be made to ESBAS for very challenging children vulnerable to exclusion, and these must be made sooner rather than later, along with parents/carers support. See Headteacher. This is a service we have to pay for.
- B) Referrals to Paediatrician via School Nurse or GP. See Assistant Senco.
- C) Educational Psychologist assessments – we have to pay for these. See Assistant Senco.
- D) For LAC children: the PEP meetings and LAC reviews are the right times to highlight serious difficulties, and push forward with support which can be funded through the ESCC virtual school team's Pupil Premium budget. (They keep the LAC children's Pupil Premium centrally.)
- E) School nurse – contact details available from Assistant Senco.
- F) Nurture Groups in school – see Assistant Senco.
- G) Refer to our school counsellor
- H) Afternoon support via Mr. Saull-Hunt's groups - see Headteacher, timetable can be changed termly as necessary.
- I) COPES referrals – this gives support for parent/carers, the family and 1:1 child support if appropriate. This is a service we pay for, for Level 2 families (refer to the continuum of need.). It is centrally funded for Level 3 families. Unfortunately, there are long waiting lists.
- J) Challenger Troop Programme – see Headteacher (Y4, 5, and 6 only)
- K) Creating a 'School Based Plan' if child is on School Action Plus due to such significant behavioural needs that an application for an Educational, Health and Care Plan may need to be taken forward in the future. See Headteacher. (IEPs must include specific behaviour targets over time first.)
- L) Through the range of leaflets that Mandy keeps (she is our PIC = Parent Information Contact) and the information on our Parent Information Board inside the school front door, there are many outside agencies (free) able to be accessed by parents/carers – make sure you know what is available if you need to.

Finally – a message for staff:

The success of dealing with a difficult child is mostly about the teacher knowing the child(ren) extremely well, building a positive relationship built on trust and value, as well as knowing the right ways to get the best response from that child and the situation. Giving the child some extra time is valuable too.

A strong home/? school relationship is worth investing time into as well.

Using the strategies above are proven to help vulnerable children, (and, in fact, all children) – and are not too time consuming.

However, an investment of time early on in the school year to build a positive relationship with the most vulnerable child(ren) can reap tremendous benefits throughout the rest of the year in the class.

- There will be times when the above strategies can be adapted/reduced as decided by the teacher, when the child is moving on to be far less challenging than they were. This means that what has been in place is working and successful, and may now be altered accordingly.
- If the above strategies are securely in place and a high focus by the teacher, yet are not making a difference over time, the teacher and Headteacher need to talk together to assess the complex needs of child further.