

# RAISING ACHIEVEMENT IN BASIC SKILLS

## A WHOLE SCHOOL STRATEGY

At Gordon Infant School every child will be given every opportunity to develop fully in many ways: intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, morally, socially and physically.

We aim to provide a safe and stimulating environment where children and adults will feel secure and want to work hard, give their best, feel valued and respected and enjoy the fun of learning.

Parents will be kept fully informed of their child's progress and will be given ample time and opportunity to discuss any matters of concern that they may have. We foster our 'open door' policy where we work in partnership with parents and value their help and support.

At Gordon Infants we support inclusion and believe every child will be given equal opportunity, regardless of gender, colour, race, religious persuasion or disability.

*From our schools Vision Statement.*

## Introduction

- ◆ Gordon Infant School is committed to raising the achievement of children in the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT.
- ◆ All staff and governors share the responsibility for ensuring that the development of basic skills has the highest priority and that a major part of the school's activities should be directed towards achieving this.
- ◆ Our intention is that all children, whatever their gender, ethnic background or level of ability - in line with our vision statement - should achieve the highest level of which they are capable.
- ◆ We intend to raise achievement by systematic use of assessment, the monitoring of teaching and learning and the evaluation of progress made, to inform planning for the teaching of further skills.
- ◆ The School Integrated Development Plan will specify our aims and objectives for raising achievement in the basic skills and the actions required to achieve them.
- ◆ We will teach Literacy, Numeracy and ICT using a cross curricular approach wherever possible, to make learning real and relevant to children.
- ◆ Maximum use will be made of the literacy and numeracy sessions and other curriculum time, including timetabled lessons in the ICT suite. Children with special educational needs will be provided with additional support as appropriate. Every effort will be made to encourage and support parents in helping their children at home by keeping them informed and providing them with advice and work for the children to complete at home.
- ◆ Priorities identified for action in the School Improvement Plan will specify dates for completion, measurable success criteria and the resources and staff training required to achieve them.
- ◆ In the daily literacy and numeracy cross curricular sessions, all children will be provided for through selection of appropriate activities and directed questioning. All children will be aware of the targets they are working to and encouraged to take ownership of their own learning through self evaluation and clearly established Assessment for learning principles. Children who are not making the expected progress in the basic skills will be given additional support both in and out of class (see intervention sheets). Additional teaching outside the classroom will take place through weekly reading and writing lessons for all highlighted children (Reading and writing Champions and Princesses). All AEN children will have an IEP with

smart targets and they will receive in class support as well as additional support on a weekly basis.

- ◆ Financial resources will be itemised in the School Improvement Plan and subject leaders will be allocated sufficient funds to meet the planned needs for their subject wherever possible.
- ◆ All children are set targets in literacy and numeracy and these are sent home for parents to celebrate the achievements of their children. New targets are set when previous targets have been achieved. Curricular/numeric targets are set in literacy and numeracy on a bi termly basis.
- ◆ Staff will analyse performance in Key Stage tests on a class and group basis and agree targets for improvement.
- ◆ The plan will be monitored in regular meetings of the whole staff and of the senior management team, and in discussion with the governing body and external authorities - LEA advisers, consultants, OFSTED etc. Quantitative (test scores) and qualitative (examination of work) data will be used and decisions made on the next steps to be taken. Information on the outcomes of the evaluation will be provided to governors and parents.

## **1. Assessment of pupil performance in basic skills**

- ◆ Reading and writing assessment forms part of an on-going process through the use of levelled guided reading and writing sheets. Numeracy conferencing happens bi termly and subsequent teacher assessment is made. All TA levels are recorded bi termly using the Ppit computerised tracking system.
- ◆ In order to assess the children's achievement in basic skills, all year groups analyse data bi termly. Predicted targets for children are set yearly, based on prior achievement and recognition of potential. Children not on track to achieve these targets are highlighted on a bi termly basis and intervention both in and out of class is planned. Foundation Teachers spend the first few weeks analysing information and making observations to ensure that each child has an accurate baseline recorded.
- ◆ The results from the data analysis are analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses in what the children are able to do, and in teaching (and to ensure there are no obvious imbalances due to gender or race).
- ◆ Other diagnostic tests are used by SEN staff as appropriate to identify specific reasons for underachievement.

## **Equal Opportunities.**

- ◆ Every effort is made to ensure that both boys and girls are given equal opportunities to develop their full potential in all areas of literacy, numeracy and ICT.
- ◆ We as a staff are aware that gender imbalances in achievements do occur and have been highlighted in recent data. As a result of this information we are monitoring and reviewing our school's test results in all year groups - and taking appropriate action as and when necessary.

## **3. Setting Targets for improvement**

- ◆ The school sets numeric targets for improvement for each year group in both literacy and numeracy on an annual basis.
- ◆ Targets are based on the analysis of past performance of individual groups of children and take into account changes in teaching which are intended to improve particular areas of their work, e.g. writing.
- ◆ Targets are realistic but challenging and reflect outcomes of monitoring, planning and children's work by the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Leadership Team and subject leaders.

## **4. Individual Improvement Plan**

- ◆ All children, not just the under-attaining, have individual targets for improving basic skills. These are agreed with the child. When the target is achieved, we celebrate and look to how they can improve further and set new targets.
- ◆ Where a child has special educational needs an Individual Education Plan will specify short term goals and the resources needed to achieve them. These are reviewed bi termly.
- ◆ National Curriculum level descriptors are used to inform levels and guide target setting with children, informing their teacher of the skills to be learnt.

## **5. Reviewing Progress.**

- ◆ All children, especially those under attaining in basic skills, have their progress reviewed on a bi termly basis, via a review of their IEP and or discussion and target setting on Open Evening. Their progress is shared with them and their parents and is recorded in writing.

## **6. Developing Staff Expertise.**

- ◆ Training for staff in raising achievement in basic skills has a priority. In addition to basic further training for all staff, and appropriate governors, for literacy and numeracy the subject leaders are expected to have a high level of subject knowledge and to have this regularly updated through attendance on courses led by the LEA.
- ◆ Regular staff meetings will be held and led by subject leaders aimed at improving the teaching of basic skills in areas identified as priorities for regular monitoring and evaluation.
- ◆ Individual staff training needs for both teaching and nonteaching staff will be identified through performance management reviews.

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## **7. Teaching Styles to improve basic skills.**

- ◆ A range of teaching styles will be used to improve basic skills, including whole class, group and individual work. Children with particular difficulties will receive additional tuition in small groups or as individuals aimed at improving specific skills. This will be provided by the school's SEN team and our Raising Standards TA.
- ◆ Particular learning needs will be identified through routine assessments or by more detailed analysis by a teacher, Educational Psychologist or other specialists. Where English is not the child's first language, appropriate advice is sought through the LEA support staff.
- ◆ The effectiveness of teaching will be monitored through observation, scrutiny of work and analysis of test results. Termly observations by the Leadership Team, and periodic visits by OFSTED will pay a key role in identifying priorities for development.

## **8. Appropriate teaching and learning materials.**

- ◆ A significant proportion of the school budget is devoted to the purchase of materials and equipment for the teaching of basic skills. Literacy, numeracy and ICT development plans identify materials needs and these are included in the school improvement plan for agreement by governors.
- ◆ Information Technology is well resourced and all classes have weekly timetabled sessions in the ICT suite for the teaching of IT skills and for using IT in the literacy and numeracy hours. In addition, each class has a computer of their own.

## **9. Involvement of parents**

- ◆ Parents are kept fully informed about how the school is raising achievement in basic skills, and how they can help in school and at home.
- ◆ Meetings are held in the evenings and at other times to explain to parents about the teaching of English and maths and how they can help at home. These sessions relate to the Foundation Stage curriculum and SAT's.
- ◆ All parents are expected to attend school at least once a term to discuss their child's progress and to agree future learning targets.

## **10. Monitoring and assessment**

- ◆ The teaching of basic skills is monitored regularly. The headteacher, other senior staff and subject leaders are responsible for this and a termly monitoring programme is in place. Termly visits by the LEA also support development in raising standards in basic skills.
- ◆ The outcomes of monitoring are fed back and discussed with individual teachers as appropriate and then discussed at regular staff meetings. Necessary changes are then made to ensure continued improvement in teaching.
- ◆ The headteacher's written report to the bi termly meeting of the whole governing body has a section devoted to monitoring progress. The curriculum, standards and SEN are a permanent agenda item for discussion.

- ◆ Progress on implementing the school improvement plan is also a termly agenda item for senior management team meetings and governors meetings.

January 2007