



CHIEVELEY PRIMARY SCHOOL
BE FUTUREPROOF!

PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING & LEARNING
July 2021

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WHAT ARE OUR CORE BELIEFS ABOUT TEACHING & LEARNING?

At Chieveley, our core belief is that 'little-and-often' is best. We believe that this systematic approach means that children make sustained progress in their core areas such as phonics, which in turn gives us more time in the week to develop well-rounded children throughout our wider curriculum.

Our whole curriculum promotes our vision - **Be Futureproof!** - which means that we equip all our children with the confidence, knowledge, skills and attitudes to thrive in *any* future.

We balance rigorous, knowledge-based learning with a skills-engaged approach. This means children do more than just regurgitate facts - they learn to apply these facts and make gains in a range of skills, too.

We treat metacognition (learning to learn) skills as a central part of our curriculum. Children are taught the 5Rs - RESILIENCE, RISK-TAKING, RESOURCEFULNESS, REFLECTIVENESS and maintaining RELATIONSHIPS - as futureproof skills and attitudes that they can apply to any problem, anywhere. We set children challenges that force them to apply these Rs in class and we view these attributes as every bit as important as handwriting and mental maths!

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE ON A DAY-TO-DAY BASIS?

We take a systematic approach to our teaching, meaning that skills and knowledge are taught carefully to reinforce and build upon what was taught the lesson before. For example, in phonics, a systematic approach may be to teach the sounds c-a-t across 3 days, with the word 'cat' being the result on the fourth and fifth days. This means we can focus on the small steps that children take in their learning and help them improve in a more timely way. We regularly talk to our children about the strengths of taking a systematic approach to work - for example when tackling open-ended maths or science investigations.

These systematic approaches require careful and constant assessment to be successful, which is outlined later on.

WIDER CURRICULUM WORK

Our wider curriculum, including the arts, humanities and RE & PSHE, is taught based on termly (or half-termly in KS1) topics. By doing this, we promote cross-curricular thinking - for example using map skills, but also coordinates, to plot the map of a treasure island... or combining art and writing to create 'volcano-day' artefacts from Pompei! We are careful to ensure that we name the skills children are developing, and also assign it to the correct subject - for example - "As a designer, I will design and label a traditional Tudor house". Our little-and-often approach to core skills means that we are able to dedicate longer in the week to these skills-engaged sessions, and often our writing units will take their lead from our topic work, too, such as creating a set of instructions for how to make a marmalade sandwich for Paddington (which cross-references English, DT and PSHE). WE continue to take a systematic approach to our topic work - each objective, regardless of specific subject - adds to previous work, building up a clear picture for our children and ensuring they have opportunities to learn in depth about historical events, people, or geographical features or phenomena!

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY 'THE PIPEWORK'?

Mr Marriott has two favourite phrases: 'systematic approaches' and 'the pipework'. These both refer to us having a consistent approach through the whole school, so the work of each class builds on the work that went before. This also gives children a clear, shared language around their learning.

The 'pipework' we use at Chieveley includes Read, Write Inc (for phonics and then spelling), White Rose Maths, weekly reading comprehension lessons and short writing units. Around this pipework, teachers are encouraged to offer wide opportunities for enrichment, enjoyment and promoting wellbeing. This includes the expectation that writing is 'published' as a planned part of the writing unit, to emphasise the need for editing and improvement, to give writing a purpose, and to reward children's efforts with a piece of 'best' work they can display or take home to enjoy.

For example, while Read, Write Inc, is a highly prescriptive and systematic phonics scheme, which gives our formal phonics lessons a structure. However, the additional games and activities we create for children allow them to rehearse, reinforce and apply their phonics knowledge while also taking part in games, crafts and outdoor activities. The 'pipework' of Read, Write Inc lessons is consistent, down to the timings, which gives more room in the day for enrichment and the application of these core skills. We also use the Read, Write, Inc reading books as the pipework for early reading as they match our planned approach to phonics. Around a child's progress through the RWI series, children will also take home picture books - to share with parents - that help develop an early enjoyment of stories and the 'social side' of reading.

In our topics, the pipework refers to the shared language and planning that teachers and children use within each term's work. Children are given their own 'topic page' to traffic light, which in turn helps them to see all the different cross-curricular strands they will be applying throughout the topic.

WHAT ROLE DOES ASSESSMENT PLAY IN TEACHING & LEARNING?

At Chieveley, we believe that accurate assessments play a vital role in helping children take the next steps in their learning. Our view is that, although assessments often happen at the end of a lesson, week, unit or term, they are actually the starting point for the next phase of learning.

Assessment can take different forms, as follows:

- On-the-go assessment in class, which prompts clarifications and direct feedback within lessons
- Marking of work to inform a child's next steps
- Children's self-assessments (traffic lights)
- End-of-week or end-of-unit evaluations, wherein teachers think about what additional support or challenge children may need
- Formal termly assessments to help gauge children's attainment and progress and identify gaps in learning
- National Assessments

On-the-go assessments

These are a key part of any teacher's toolkit and are sometimes referred to as 'Assessment for Learning'. These are the everyday strategies we use to identify misconceptions that children have and therefore correct them immediately, before they become embedded.

Marking of work

End-of-lesson marking ensures that teachers can identify the children who have achieved the objective for the lesson, and those who need more support to do so. This knowledge will directly link to the activities and objectives the children encounter the following lesson, from a more instructional approach, to additional time to rehearse methods and skills, to challenges where children need to apply these skills in an unfamiliar way.

Children's self-assessments (traffic lights)

At the start and end of a piece of work, children are asked to traffic-light how they feel about their learning (red = stuck, amber = okay to try it, green = needing a challenge). This helps teachers establish who may need more support or challenge in a quick way - simply by asking the 'red' children to come to the carpet or by signposting the challenges for 'green' learners.

Evaluations

At the end of a unit of work (which may cover one or more weeks), teachers complete evaluations - formalising their on-the-go assessments and observations from their marking. This ensures that teachers use their knowledge of the children, not the expectations of the curriculum, to plan and prepare the next phase of work (for example, by targeting a particular grammatical feature in their next writing unit that children need more time to rehearse). At Chieveley, we prioritise these evaluations (and the next steps they identify) over formal, long-form lesson plans.

Formal termly assessments

We assess at 3 points during the school year: At the end of the Autumn term (or shortly before Christmas); at the end of the Spring term (before Easter) and near the end of the Summer term (to help inform end-of-year reports).

During these periods, children sit formal 'tests' and also complete a longer piece of writing for teachers to assess. We see it as part of our moral duty to children that we remove the stress around assessment, and teach them that assessment is simply a part of the learning process, which helps us know what to work on next. We have chosen a style of internal assessment that is similar to the formal, national tests, as this means when children encounter such papers in year 6, they see them as 'normal'.

National Assessments

We take part in all formal, national assessments: The Reception Baseline Assessment; The Year 1 Phonics Check; The KS1 National Curriculum Assessments; The Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check; and the KS2 National Curriculum Assessments (or as most people refer to them - SATs).

PROVIDING CHALLENGE FOR ABLE LEARNERS

Within all of our lessons, our aim is for children to not only meet a given objective, but have the chance to exceed it!

Challenges take different forms, depending on the lesson and the needs of the class. Sometimes, the challenge is a tangible piece of work, although we also try to offer challenge through our conversations with children. For example, when children compose pieces of writing, part of our ongoing challenge for able learners is to constantly improve their use of vocabulary, and even know when it is appropriate for their work to subvert the grammatical rules you would normally expect within a given piece of writing.

We are a member of NACE (The National Association for Able Children in Education), which means we have regular access to materials to support us in challenging more able learners and also help develop our staff to offer different types of challenge within each lesson.

PROMOTING PROGRESS FOR CHILDREN WITH SEND

We take a graduated approach to supporting children at Chieveley. This means that children - including those with SEND - may receive different levels of support depending on their particular needs within the lesson. Their support may include the following approaches:

- Small-group focus within lessons (led by either the teacher or TA)
- Additional resources to support thinking and learning within lessons (eg vocab mats)
- End-of-lesson support, based on a red traffic light (re-teaching ready for the next lesson)
- Additional booster groups during designated slots such as morning tasks (pre-teaching)
- Longer-term booster support (15 minute sessions in the afternoon, so as not to narrow their curriculum)
- 1:1 support with an external provider (eg Emotional Health Academy)

Our approach to supporting children ensures an equality of opportunity for all children to succeed, achieved through equity of support and resourcing. While we set lessons accordingly against the needs of the class as a whole, we provide additional resourcing, support and challenge to those to require it so all children have the same opportunity to succeed and achieve within that lesson.

Some adjustments are bigger than others - such as the difference between a vocabulary card and 1:1 support, however the intent of our scaffolding is to ensure we don't lower our expectations of what children can achieve; we give them the tools they need **IN ORDER** to achieve, and this equity approach means all children have equal opportunities to succeed. This is perhaps best illustrated by the image below.



Equity

More specific information about our approach to SEND can be found in the SEND Local Offer on our website.