Kirkheaton Primary School
play learn achieve

Learning Environment & Display Policy

This policy gives guidance to staff on learning environment and displays and should be read alongside the Teaching and Learning Handbook, Teaching and Learning Policy, Marking/Feedback Policy and Assessment Policy.

Introduction:

Kirkheaton Primary School's approach to promoting high quality teaching and effective learning is an integral part of our whole school curriculum, **underpinned by the aims of the school.** It is based on clear values, high expectations and up to date research of effective teaching and learning strategies. We also recognise that it is the responsibility of the school to provide high quality teaching and learning opportunities and a **safe and inspiring learning environment** which will significantly influence the behaviour of our learners. The learning environment should be welcoming, providing children with a 'Home from Home' feeling and conducive to learning; **reflecting the imaginative, fun, engaging and creative curriculum** we offer. It should cater for all learners and their individual learning needs, enabling them to become **independent and resourceful learners**. Displaying children's work enhances the learning environment whilst also showing them that we value them and their efforts through celebrating and acknowledging their achievements.

Rationale:

'Aesthetically pleasing surroundings influence both learning and social behaviour. Displays are focal points for learning. They show to a wider audience what the children have achieved while reaffirming the value of their work. Displays help children and teachers to see things in different ways and to make connections between ideas.'
Art, Craft and Design in the Primary School – Editor John Lancaster

'The way in which work and other material is displayed and arranged in a school is more than a matter of convenience; it is a reflection of the attitudes that prevail there.'
The Arts in School – Gulbenkian Report

The learning environment we create in school is crucial. At Kirkheaton we believe that the school environment is the **silent teacher**. It supports us all in giving messages about our ethos and values, and **celebrates learning of a high quality**. It raises self-esteem and encourages pride in the classroom and school. The learning environment at Kirkheaton Primary School reinforces the school's commitment to high standards and the drive to continually raise achievement. Showcasing learners' achievements is a **celebration** and encourage high standards and progression across the curriculum. It must be organised, clean and tidy to enable our young learners to become independent, responsible and resourceful. It should **entice** children to learn and demonstrate our **high expectations** and standards. All staff are accountable and should take responsibility for maintaining the physical environment, including shared areas of the school such as corridors and communal areas.

Aims and Objectives:

To provide a visually rich and stimulating environment which:

- Encourages aesthetic awareness, respect for the school environment and actively working to ensure it is an enriched place to work and learn;
- Reflects the vision and aims of the school towards excellence;
- Reflects a skill based curriculum and progression throughout the school – particularly in English and Maths;
- Arouses curiosity, poses questions and stimulates enquiry, interest and discussion to challenge children's knowledge and understanding of the world;
- Positively impacts on learning; through consolidation and reactivation of previous learning whilst introducing new information and knowledge;
- Gives opportunities for learners to be observant and constructively critical;
- Offer learners an audience for their work, promoting self esteem and encouraging them to value their own work and that of others;
- Reflects our topic based approach and the rich and varied experiences of current learning;
- Reflect and value different levels of achievement and cultural backgrounds, promoting equal opportunities for all;
- Inform and inspire parents, carers, governors, teachers and visitors to the school, developing a life-long love of learning.

General Guidelines to ensure consistency across the school:

- Good quality displays require planning, including careful consideration to the choice of colours for both backing papers mounting and boarders;
- Large rolls of paper should be used to back displays and where possible corrugated boarder rolls should be used to edge as these are more robust;
- Where items are laminated for displays, these need to be matt pouches to minimise glare;
- Ensure that the variety and balance of the curriculum is well reflected within the learning environment;
- Ensure displays are changed regularly and reflect the teaching, learning and current interests of the class as well as the abilities and aspirations of the class and the class teacher;
- 3D work as well as 2D work needs to be reflected. Remember things can be hung up (where appropriate) to make a change from the walls but be mindful of sensors;
- Posters, photos and information about topics etc should be used alongside children's work, where relevant, to promote teaching points and extend learning;
- Work surfaces must be clutter free and used for interactive display, where possible, or to display children's models etc;
- Information and resources, such as tier 2 and 3 key vocabulary words, must be displayed to aid explanation and the children's learning;
- Questions should be displayed to extend the children's thinking and to encourage reasoning and viewers engagement;
- Examples of high-quality children's work should be displayed to reflect high expectations;
- Ensure that all written work, produced by the children is kept straight and flat so that it is easily readable;
- Caption/labels must be large, clear and mounted, and work displayed in communal areas should include the class/year group name;
- All work for display should be clearly labelled with the pupil first name only for GDPR reasons. These will be consistent across school using the agreed font and format and printed onto gold;
- All displays should include a brief description of the work;
- All writing samples, by adults, must follow the school cursive handwriting policy and where typed text is used, the CCW cursive font should be used;
- A display board can be the basis of a display but should not be limited to this space – be creative! The use of shelves, tables, windows and the area around the display is encouraged;
- Staple gun use is limited to securing the backing paper, display boarder and heavy 3D items only. Bambi staplers should be used to secure any work and labels as these are easily removed and cause less damage;
- Encourage children to regularly look at, read and discuss work on display, both in class and around school;
- Work is to be trimmed and mounted evenly and intended straight edges are straight. All work should be at least single mounted (double mounted in shared areas and corridors) using appropriate coloured paper with an equally sized 1cm boarder all the way around or 5mm mount on 1cm.
- The chalk painted areas, in the shared spaces around school, are to record comments made by pupils during pupil voice sessions. The up-keep of these are the responsibility of the relevant subject lead and is a means of promoting your subject area.

School displays:

School leaders and class teachers will be responsible for displays around the school. The member of staff and display content will be agreed at the start of the school year and revisited throughout the year for updated content. All displays must reflect the professional, innovative and creative nature of the work that is being carried out across school and be children's work as opposed to wallpaper! The school environment should have a 'home from home' feeling as children spend the majority of their day here. Frames will be used to showcase pieces of art work produced by our pupils encouraging pupils to have a sense of pride in their achievements. Shelving units will be installed and used to display subject related books to promote a 'love of reading'. Shared areas should remain clutter free, with learning resources stored safely in cupboards and draw units to prevent fire hazards and safety risks.

Throughout the year whole school displays will include but will not be limited to:

- School values and behaviour policy of Respect, Responsibility and Resilience (Display Team)
- School council (Teacher Rep.)
- Eco School – Recycle, Reuse, Reduce (Eco Club Lead)

- Forest School (Forest School Lead)
- PE and sporting achievements (PE Lead)
- Star Writer Display (Staff Teaching Team)
- British Values (Display Team)
- Art Gallery (Display Team)
- Year Group learning and topics. (Year group teams)
- 'Classopoly' behaviour and attendance award board (SLT/Behaviour Lead)

Timescales:

Time will be allocated at the beginning of the academic year for displays in the main entrance and hall to be put up. These displays (where appropriate) will remain up all year however; it is the responsibility of subject leaders and Year group teams to update their displays regularly to reflect current curriculum developments and big issues. Year group displays in shared areas and corridors should be changed on a half termly basis and showcase learning from the previous half term. Due to time constraints and in order to ensure that we are being efficient, work displayed in class on curriculum boards should be reused and recycled with directed time given over for you to change these displays. Moving last half terms topic displays into shared areas ensure that they are a reference point for pupils to reactive their learning and so that other year groups /visitors can see what children have been learning.

Quality of work on display:

Work on display in our shared areas should communicate the high expectations we have for learning and achievement. Therefore, work on display is to have been produced by the children for display purposes and time in class needs to be planned in for this. No work on displays should be photocopied from books. There is nothing wrong with handing a lesson over to copying work up in neat, if it's to go on display, as the focus is on handwriting and presentation. Children need to be taught and encouraged to consider how they present their work so that it is aesthetically pleasing to others and to put time and effort into producing quality pieces, as this is a life skill.

The Classroom Learning Environment:

As the surroundings in which children learn can significantly influence their educational performance and well-being, classroom environments are of upmost importance. The layout, displays and resources within the classroom all play a vital role in shaping the children's learning. As a staff, we are aware of the increasing number of children in education now struggling with adverse childhood experiences which can have long term consequences on the developing brain when affected by trauma. Parts of the brain we need children to access at school, such as problem-solving, memory and reasoning are programmed to shut down when a child feels stress or fear as a protective coping mechanism. However, this is detrimental to their ability to participate in school and as a staff we have a responsibility to ensure that our learning environments are safe, inclusive and conducive to learning.

'Brightly coloured classrooms full of different stimulus are not likely to create an atmosphere which inspires learning for a child who struggles with stress, attention, concentration and hyperactivity.'

'When a child is stressed or anxious these maladaptive coping mechanisms are triggered and as a result teachers are dealing with more behavioural issues in class, struggling with the effects of trauma (often without knowing it).'

A calming, therapeutic classroom environment - Shahana Knight

Therefore at Kirkheaton our aim is to create therapeutic, calming classrooms that feel nurturing and allow children's brains to be calm enough to learn. The job of the classroom is to silently create the right atmosphere for learning to occur. To be calm and therapeutic is its main task. This contrasts directly with the bright and vibrant corridors that we want to create around communal areas in school.

Classroom Displays

- All boards will be backed in neutral hessian, black or the school blue with corrugated blue, black or white boarder;
- Working walls for English and maths should be in the wipe clean white, blue or teal with corrugated boarder. For maths squared wipe clean will be used to support layout when modelling for children;

- All boards should be backed in similar colours that complement each other to create a feeling of space and continuity. The effect is dramatic and will help minimise distractions in the room. This also allows the work you display to be the focus rather than the whole board;
- The Cri-cut machine will be used to create all display titles to ensure consistency between classrooms;
- All work should be kept on the display board where possible. If for any reason things need to be put up onto bear walls this should be done with Blu Tack and NOT staples in order to prevent damage to the plaster and unnecessary maintenance work needing to be carried out.
- Display boxes and tubs will be in the school royal blue or wicker baskets;
- Any print outs or posters to go on displays should be copied onto pastel colours to support any children with dyslexia;
- The use of fairy lights and battery-operated candles can be used to create calming lighting as an alternative to having the strip lights on;
- Relaxing music can be played to create a calming atmosphere and to regulate noise level in the classroom.

At Kirkheaton Primary School we have agreed that all classroom displays will include the following to ensure consistency and parity across classrooms:

- English working wall that shows learning journey linked to the focus text with key vocabulary clearly visible. A consistent phonics and handwriting chart will be clearly displayed as reference for the children in each classroom and common exception words for your year group;
- Maths display to support teaching of current mathematical concepts to include a number line (appropriate to the age and phase of learning), 100 square, multiplication grid and worked examples by the teacher;
- Curriculum focus display to reflect current cross-curricular learning. This will include a timeline to show the historical events that children are learning about within the year group and those they may have learnt about previously;
- Reading display that promotes a love of reading linked to class author as part of transition work and updated to reflect text chosen for World Book Day or poetry;
- School values for behaviour – Respect, Responsibility, Rights and Resilience (4R's). This will be consistent across school with the use of Light-up letters and black chalk board R's used to emphasise the school's expectations and values. Teaching staff also have a commitment to reflect their class and its diversity in this display. The house teams will be displayed on our near this display to promote team work in line with the school values;
- Zone of regulation display to support pupils in becoming emotionally literate and to be able to successfully communicate and regulate their feelings at every age. This should also include your class 'Worry Monster';
- Phonics board (EYFS/KS1) with complex speed sounds chart displayed in every classroom throughout school.
- Widgit will be used across all subject areas to support pupils to access learning with pictorial support.
- Visual timetable of the school day;
- Classrooms/shared areas across school will also include a small world/role play area linked to specific year group topics being taught. This is vital in encouraging imagination, vocabulary and communication skills in literacy alongside self-esteem, confidence, performance/presentation; skills for life and is useful for engaging/re-focusing pupils with additional needs in learning through play.
- All displays throughout school will have a link to UNICEF Rights Respecting and a brief explanation.

'As we know play is often talked and put as if it were a relief from series learning. But for children play IS serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood, almost all creativity involves purposeful play and is a form of communication for those children who struggle to articulate their needs' – Abraham Maslow

N.B. New shelving units in classrooms should be used to display class reads, top 50 books you must read before you leave Year ... and/or topic related books attractively in order to promote a love of books/literature throughout school. They may also be used interactively to support the Zones of Regulation so that children can communicate to you their feelings throughout the day. This area should not be used as storage for teaching files etc.

The classroom learning environment for English and Maths are based on the 'working wall approach' where teachers' modelling and prompts are displayed as part of on-going learning in each classroom. A working wall is a flexible model,

so it is down to the individual teacher to make it work in the way they feel is most effective for their children. However, the following are some general guidelines:

- Children's work is used to affirm features of work that are desired;
- Vocabulary relevant to the focus of the learning is evident in all subjects at tier 2 and 3;
- There is an interactive element in all displays, where children have the chance to interact with the display either during the main teaching input or as part of their lesson or informally to extend their learning beyond the lesson. Interactive aspects of the display should enable children to use a range of learning styles – post it notes, counting resources, speech bubbles to record children's quotes that demonstrate knowledge and understanding;
- Work on the wall reflects the National Curriculum objectives for each year group;
- Work may not necessarily be mounted as it is expected to develop rapidly and change frequently;
- Teachers and pupils may write captions and posters by hand as part of the lesson, which are then put on the wall as reference;
- Handwriting should follow the cursive handwriting policy and anything typed should be in CCW cursive as part of our commitment to improving handwriting across school.

All displays across school should be used to showcase children's work and should not be used for staff notices unless in the designated staff areas such as school office and staffroom. Notices, Rotas and class lists etc should be kept in stock cupboards out of sight of pupils and visitors.

Work and posters must not be stuck on windows. Obscuring windows is contrary to access and inclusion advice. It also presents a poor picture from outside and is not in line with the design ethos and principles of the school. However, we encourage our staff to utilise the space and therefore chalk/glass pens can be used to write on windows to display key vocabulary as a reference point. At the beginning of the year a specialist artist will be commissioned to support you in this area decorating your windows to reflect the core subjects of Maths, English and Science with any additional windows being used for foundation subjects. Once these are completed please do not use any abrasive materials on them or water as this will rub them off.

Display Team

Support is available for class teachers with displays from the display team (Fiona Szewczyk, Katie Field, Carol Shuttleworth, Gill Meachen and Vikki Beaumont). All staff have a collective responsibility to ensure that all display resources such as backing papers, mounting papers, boarder rolls etc. are stored neatly and should inform a member of the display team if you require a particular item or if stock is running low so that it can be ordered. These members of staff will be trained to use the Cri-Cutter and can offer support to all staff when creating lettering for classrooms.

In order to ensure that quality displays are achievable, all staff need access to the right equipment. Therefore, the display team will provide each class with a display toolkit which will include the following:

- Staple gun and staples
- Bambi stapler and staples
- Fishing wire
- Blu Tack
- Scissors
- Pritt Stick
- Sharpie pens/Chalk pens (POSCA)
- Chalk pen Scraper
- Double sided sticky tape
- 2 sets of name labels for display (These should be passed up to next years teacher)

Health and Safety:

Staff should ensure:

- Step ladders and kick-stools are used correctly in order to access displays that are out of easy reach. Please do not use chairs.

- Displays are safe, e.g. staples to not stick out so that they could cause injury, items are not likely to fall from displays and that hanging items do not cause strangulation.
- Pins should not be used unless for a specific design purpose, previously agreed with a member of the display team or SLT.
- Display should not affect the safe function of lights or alarm systems.
- All guillotines and staple guns should be stored securely and out of sight and reach of children.

Monitoring

To ensure high standards for all areas of the learning environment, the display team, in collaboration with SLT are responsible for monitoring the standards and effectiveness of displays around the school and for checking and ordering display items needed. As a school that promotes collaborative working and professional responsibility, CPD sessions may be used to complete learning walks in order to share best practise and to celebrate great work going on around school. Photographs maybe taken and kept in a portfolio to show how displays are used to enhance the learning environment in our school.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Display Team alongside the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

Date Reviewed by governing body:
Date due for review: