Classroom and Learning Environment Policy

2022-23

'The Love of Christ impels us'

To be

Ready,Respectful,Safe

'To love one another as I have loved you'

Reviewed: July 2022

Introduction

Fully inclusive classroom environments can both support and enrich the learning of all children. As well as being vibrant and welcoming, the classroom environment can be a learning tool, a way of engaging children and building the class community. It can create a sense of ownership and be used to support and promote learning as well as celebrating children's work. With careful thought and planning, an effective classroom environment is used as an interactive resource supporting teaching, learning and assessment.

At St Peter and St Paul we believe that a well organised and stimulating environment has a direct impact on the quality of teaching and learning, and therefore supports raising standards and enables pupils to develop independence as learners.

Aims

The school's aims for the learning environment are:

- To value and enhance children's work
- Reflect the vision and aims of the school towards excellence
- To celebrate achievement
- To increase children's self - esteem and pride in their work
- To motivate children by setting high standards to which they can aspire
- To create a stimulating teaching and learning environment
- To encourage aesthetic awareness and a positive attitude to our school environment
- To arouse curiosity, pose questions and stimulate enquiry
- To reflect and value different levels of achievement and cultural backgrounds
- To inform and inspire parents, carers, governors, teachers and visitors to the school.

Individual teachers are responsible for the learning environment within their own classroom and designated areas.

Creating/ organising an enthusiastic exciting creative and alive classroom environment

The learning environments of successful classrooms are calm, welcoming stimulating environments where high value is placed on learning. The visual environment is very important and should display work which is representative of all children and all ability levels.
Displays should reflect the taught curriculum, **include dual language script where appropriate** and be changed regularly to sustain interest and discussion.

There is a calm environment when:

- Children are on task

- Children are aware of acceptable noise levels for classwork and teachers help to maintain this by example

- Children are taught to tidy up after themselves

- Children know the teachers' rules and boundaries

- Classroom support staff and helpers work in a similar way to the teacher and collaborative planning reflects this

- Children have appropriate amount of room for the activity.

The room is well organised when:

Drawers and tidy areas are labelled so that pupils can be independent and know what goes where

- Pupil's resources are easy to access
- Storage areas are set up
- There is a clear furniture layout
- The room is kept tidy

All classroom environments will provide the following at an appropriate level for the age of the children working in the classroom (List A). The following will also be used within lessons to support teaching and learning. List B represents what is desirable.

List A (essential)
- Working wall
- Prompts, ideas and good examples of work that can be generated during lessons are displayed and referred to, to support future learning (what a good one looks like)
- Children's work displayed
- Cover pages at the start of each topic in all books
- Knowledge Organisers in books- History, Geography, Music, Science

- Learning Objective clearly displayed on cover page and in steps to success
- Steps to success- keep referring to these in lesson
- Self and Teacher assessment completed on steps to success at the end of the lesson by teacher and child
- Names on children's trays
- School rules and values on display
- Key words and subject-specific/technical vocabulary displayed and discussed for a variety of curriculum areas. Please note, these need to be updated regularly to ensure vocabulary links to an appropriate learning context
- Key questions are displayed and referred to in lessons (not only important for children but also enables adults working with children to be clear about teacher expectations)
- Number lines (again differentiated for year group)
- Alphabet/sounds/phonics/blends displayed, especially in EYFS and KS1
- Visual timetable (particularly important for SEND pupils)
- Motivation display (e.g.: House point jars, 'Stars of the Week/Golden Time points/Monitors etc.)
- Exciting and enticing reading corner
- Fire evacuation procedures (Health and Safety)

Book Corners

Book corners should be inviting, stimulating places to read and learn. The use of soft fabrics, cushions and plants can 'soften' the area making it more inviting. The use of key questions, interactive author focus displays and displays of featured genres can all enhance the learning experience for pupils using a book corner well. Any books in poor condition should be removed from book areas and reported to our English Lead.

Storage of Pupils Books

Pupil's books should always be stored in a neat, accessible, using storage containers, table trays or individual pupil trays. This ensures that pupil books are always maintained in good order and do not become dog eared or worn. Pupil books should be easily accessible for children to find or distribute. Building good routines for pupils to find their books is key to managing a workable system.

By contrast, where books are left on the teacher desk or scattered around a room, this conveys confusing messages to children that their books are not valued and makes it harder for pupils to access work books independently.

Key Areas

Key areas for the storage of equipment must be clearly defined and easily accessible for pupils. They should always be organised and tidy.

Recommended key areas include: Art Resources; Maths Area/Resources; Topic Table/Role Play Area; Outdoor Learning Spaces

List B (desirable)
- Plants
- Birthdays
- Posters - taking account of children's interests

The 'Working Wall' Approach

What is a Working Wall? It is the public display of the learning process and evolves as each day progresses. It is not static. It can increase effective learning and teaching. The purpose of the working wall is to support children's independent writing. It evolves as a unit of work unfolds, and is not intended to be a tidy display of finished work.

Well planned working walls can:

Support independent working and learning: think of the Working Wall as an extra adult in the classroom. It can help support children who become stuck and direct children to new tasks when they have self-assessed that they have successfully finished an activity.

Support whole class and guided group teaching: models and images, key vocabulary and useful prompts are displayed and referred to by the teacher to support children in their understanding.

Celebrate success in RE/ Mathematics/English/Science/Foundation subjects:
Examples of successful work and photographs of children working successfully should be displayed to show that work in RE/Mathematics/English/Science and the Foundation subjects is valued and to support learning. It is also a good idea to allow children to make contributions to the wall; post-it notes are an ideal resource for this.

What could a Working Wall include?
- Objectives of the current unit (i.e. 'This week we are learning….'). This will change as the unit of work move on
- Models and images linked to an objective
- Key vocabulary
- Practical mathematical resources linked to an objective

- Examples of children's work linked to an objective or (building up to eventual completion) – guided/independent
- Photographs of children working
- Child selected activities that they can borrow from the working wall to support or extend learning
- An opportunity for children to interact with the display e.g. through responding to a 'Big Question' by attaching sticky notes to the display, or exploring relevant practical resources.

A working wall is not:

- A display;
- A permanent fixture;
- A receptacle for every bit of information relating to a topic/ series of lessons.

Displays at St Peter and St Paul

Provided below are some practical guidelines for displaying children's work. These guidelines are taken from what we already do and some new ideas, intended to support all staff in achieving the best quality displayed work at the school.

1. <u>Aim for quality</u> (and do not accept second best!)

All pupils are capable of producing quality work regardless of age, ability or need. Having high expectations and timetabling quality time for pupils to publish work for display is the key for achieving good results. If a pupil finds it difficult to sustain longer pieces of work for publication, publish extracts or even a small section of work.

2. **<u>Keep it simple</u>**

A good quality display is not about the brightness of the backing paper or the size of the title but more about the quality of the work. It should speak for itself and should stimulate interest.

3<u>. Take time to plan</u>

When planning a display, ensure the piece of work is single backed or double backed if the work is special and cut straight.

4. Using drapes and props

Drapes and fabrics can really enhance a classroom display, generating interest in the display and creating textures for pupils. The same is true for 3D objects and materials.

5. Using photographs in display to help show the learning process

Photographs in display are really great for those "you had to be there" moments. Especially when the learning takes place over a period of time, photographs are great for capturing the learning processes.

6. Quotes, Context and Key Vocabulary

Quotes from children can emphasise what they have learnt and the impact of learning. Alongside this add any key vocabulary linked to the learning and a context which explains what children have been learning.

7. Insert Key Questions or Challenges

The text in display encourages pupils to find out more. It sets readers the challenge of finding the key information contained in the display in the same way as a good information book would.

Interactive maths displays are a great way of introducing learning opportunities such as problem solving. Pupils will spend time solving the problems and will apply skills taught in the lessons.

8. Get creative with the borders and let the work speak for itself

To add your own personal touch and emphasise creativity, try using different style borders to make your display stand out.

Clear labels and headings to indicate the title of the work and which subject or topics it is related to Information about the process involved

The learning objectives and skills involved

The year group of the children (when outside the individual classrooms).

A variety of written texts styles should be used (e.g. handwritten by pupils'/adults, computer fonts, etc.).
Display work should be accessible to children and be easy to read ('not too busy')
Where appropriate, multi bilingual translations should be used.

9. **Put pieces at eye level.** Children can't enjoy looking at something they have to strain to see. Things hanging above their heads can sometimes be distracting and annoying so take care when doing so.

10. Technology:
Use Augmented Reality, sound buttons and QR codes when appropriate. QR codes are becoming more and more popular in the classroom and are a good way of reward children for getting involved and excelling in the classroom activities. They are easy to set up and bring something extra to your display.

This is what we are going to be looking for:

A good humanities display should illustrate a breadth of your topic and include as many of the following as possible:

Essentials:

- A timeline to position the period studied OR
- A map with the areas studied highlighted
- An art or DT linked outcome of high quality (could be set as homework)
- Key learning from the unit -presented well by the children-the type of things on a knowledge organiser
- Extended cross curricular writing (well presented, so an end of unit outcome rather than a Twinkl worksheet). This could be a historical diary (history) or a non-chronological report (geography). It is really important that this is as high quality as you would expect in an English end of unit outcome. The presentation is also really important- no felt tips
- Questions to engage the readers: What do you know about volcanoes?

Desirable:

- Interactivity (placing images on a time line /sequencing)
- Pictures of children engaged in practical activities (inspiration days or studying artefacts)
- Assessment stars – This is a large star where you comment on a piece of work: I really like the way Jordan has used a glossary on his report/this is an excellent overview of the Vikings in your introduction.

Science display and what they should include:

Key vocabulary

The learning intention

Fun facts to hook the children

Interactive with interesting questions and an opportunity for the children to respond

The use of sound buttons and QR codes
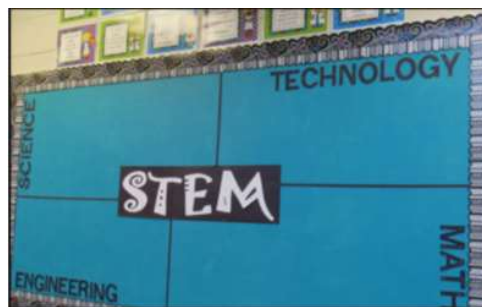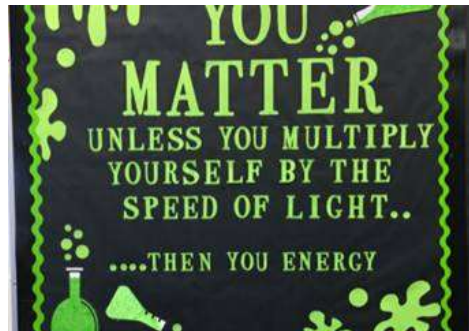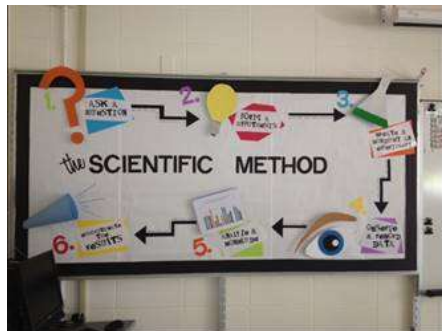
Below are some examples scientific themes:

Remember the enquiry method

Try some science humour

Discover different kinds of scientists

Feature famous scientists

Use hoola hoops for interactive diagrams

Other ideas – find out about famous inventors

Catch the children's attention with fun facts

Help the children reframe their thinking

Art Display

Some ideas on displaying children's Art work

Creating Art is a time for celebrating free thinking, creativity and workmanship.

1. Create an Art Mobile

This is an awesome way to give your room some umph! An art mobile adds a 3D element to the work, and allows the artwork to spin in different directions.

2. Make Fancy Borders

This allows you to still use the conventional wall space, but in a jazzed up way. Use decorative scrapbook paper, and clothes-pegs with a fancy bow as a way to hang the artwork. This will have your room looking super classy.

3. Mimic an art museum with an art board:

This will create the perception that your class' artwork should truly be appreciated. You can display this in a classroom corner. Or, alternatively, you can arrange to have some hallway space for your display.

4. Use Frames

What a way to give artwork a finishing touch.

5. Hang Artwork From The Ceiling

This will make your class look and feel more alive, and it utilizes an otherwise unused space. All you need for this is some string and a hole punch.

6. Use A Clothing Line

Something about this look is so modern! You could use a clothing line, or art wire. Also you can have students decorate their own art clothes-pins that will be

their special pin for all their artwork. This will save you the hassle of stapling and unstapling work to the wall and potentially even damaging the artwork (and your time).

7. An Art Rolodex

This is an ingenious way of displaying artwork! The idea is: use a paper towel holder, place binder rings on it with plastic paper holders, in which you place the children's artwork.

8. An ice lolly Easel

This is great, because it's mostly a DIY for your students and leaves you without the task of displaying anything. Allow your students to create mini easels for their work using ice lolly sticks, and they can then display their work proudly on their desks.

Staples should be completely removed when changing a display and when used, staple at an angle so the staples are easy to remove. Do not staple into walls as it pulls out the plaster.

Masking tape and gaffer tape NOT to be used on walls

Be wary of using blutack on walls as it leaves a greasy mark on painted surfaces.

Do not hoard resources - when you have finished using them they should be promptly returned to the resources/stock room so other staff can access them easily (please support colleagues by putting resources away properly in the correct place. If you are unsure, ask)

Whole School Display

- Main display areas in the communal areas of the school will be changed on a termly basis

- Each term there is a subject focus so that classes can display work in the communal areas of the school. This is to ensure that visitors to the school gain an understanding of the progression of learning through the early years and key stages.

- There will be a showcase of events that have occurred during the term between all year groups using the display boards outside the classrooms

- Work on display will reflect the current learning in the school

- The subject to be displayed will be decided by Phase leaders and SLT

Monitoring:

To ensure high standards for all areas of the learning environment, the Head Teacher and Deputy Head teacher staff will complete regular learning walks. Feedback will be given to individual members of staff.

Reviewed: July 2022

Appendix A

Monitoring in Classrooms – Learning Environment and Displays

Date:	
Classroom/ Area:	
Teacher:	

Learning Environment Checklist	Developed	To be done/ comments
MUST HAVES		
Rotas and Timetables		
School rules and values		
House point jars and house points		
Working Walls		
Systems for Organisation		
Shelves need to be tidy and resource labelled clearly		
All resources should be kept in a central place		
Clear and tidy teacher areas		
Name tray labels printed		
Stimulating and inviting book corner		
Phonics board (KS1)		
Job list/ helper list		
Books accessible for pupils		
English		
Writing exemplar wall end of expectations		

Reading strategies		
English working wall (change according to new text)		

English – FS/ KS1		
Role play area		
High frequency words/ ambitious words display		
Weekly phonics		
Story boards		
Poetry		
Puppets		
Book of the week and props		
Listening area		
Writing area		
Flashcards		
Magnetic letters		
Dictionaries and thesauri		
Atlases		
Prompts for writing		
Clear modelled handwriting samples		
Book corner		

Mathematics		
Number line – child height		
Mathematic skills		

Visual models to support taught strategy		
Mathematics vocabulary		
Mathematics resources labelled		
Science		
Key vocabulary displayed		
Investigative language displayed		
Let's investigate table-topic table		
Use of photographs		
ICT		
Computers clear of clutter		
E safety Rules on Display		
SEN		
Visual timetables		
Interactive displays		
Areas for resources for individual children		
Pictorial supports		
Inclusion		
Confident displays that reflect all members of the school community		

Monitored by:
Feedback to teacher:
Follow up date: