

# Duns Primary School



# Learning Policy

## In Duns Primary School we believe ideal learning happens when:

Children **lead** their own learning

Opportunities are given to work **independently** and **collaboratively**

Children are **engaged** and **purposeful**

Learning is **experiential** and **active**

Learning takes place in the **natural environment** and outdoors whenever possible

Learning provides **challenge** and is **differentiated**

Learning is well **planned** and **organised**

We **nurture** the whole child

The key principles outlined above are displayed in all classrooms. These are kept at the forefront when planning and during ongoing discussions with staff and pupils.

## Learning with a Happy Heart

Providing a **nurturing**, caring environment is core to our purpose here at Duns Primary. We pride ourselves on providing a happy learning environment and always aim to ensure children are listened to and have someone they can go to if this is not the case.

## Early Level

*'Play makes children into whole people, able to keep balancing their lives in a fast changing world'*

*'Children's free flow play is characterised by deep concentration and it is difficult to distract them from their learning.'* Tina Bruce' Developing Learning in Early Childhood' 2004

From a child's first days in our nursery class right through Early Level children will be able to use their first-hand experience in life during play experiences to develop, grow and learn. This free flow play will have key features based on

sound research and accepted childhood theorists such as Emilio Reggio, Froebel and more recently Tina Bruce. These include:

### The Environment

- An exciting playroom/classroom full of wonder and stimulation which children want to explore
- A place where children are encouraged to be creative and imaginative e.g Creative play/building area, role play area
- Children are able to try out different ideas and test conclusions.
- Children have a choice and resources are open-ended which can be easily accessed.
- Opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy across all areas

### Role of Adult

*'Show children where to look but not what to see' Froebel*

- Children and or/adults play alongside each other, in parallel play associatively or cooperatively
- Children have control over their own learning and adults are there to facilitate learning
- Adults provide inspiration and stimulus by providing appropriately 'pitched' learning experiences depending on the child's level of development

### Progression at Early Level

- As children progress into P1 there will be more opportunities for **teacher directed** learning and children will continue to explore through **open-ended experiences** provided by the staff to engage and motivate.
- In P1 and P2 much of the learning will be focussed around the three key curriculum areas of **Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Well-being**.
- Developing independence** encouraging children to have **ownership** of their learning will remain a key aim of learning at this and every stage in school.

-Staff will ensure there is a child-centred approach to identify **individual pupil interests** to help provide purpose and relevance.

-As children progress more challenge and differentiation will be introduced

### **Beyond Early Level**

At Duns we will continue to apply the importance of the **learning environment**, how it is organised. As children progress throughout the school the pace and challenge in learning will continue and pupils will continue to develop more control over their own learning. We continually seek ways to do this through working with guidance from Education Scotland, including HGIOS 4, relevant theory and by our own research of current practice in and beyond our school.

### **Challenge and Growth Mindset**

In Duns we believe learners should be motivated to attempt new things and persevere when things are difficult. They are encouraged to be curious and creative when confronting new tasks and find strategies to solve problems. Teachers encourage this by presenting tasks in a non-judgemental climate citing examples of people who have excelled in facing challenging and complex situations and overcoming obstacles. In this way we aim to make learners aware of their growing ability to cope and in turn build their resilience.

### **We promote a 'growth mindset' through our learning powers**

- **Direct your attention and concentrate**
- **Use your imagination**
- **Notice and be curious**
- **Success through error**
- **Persevere-don't give up**
- **Strive to improve**

### **Engagement and Purpose**

Staff in Duns Primary aim to provide motivating learning experiences that are contextualised and arouse interest. Helping learners understand **what** s/he is going to do, **why** s/he is doing it and that it has **value beyond the here and now** adds to this motivation. This involvement in learning encourages pupils to share ideas and thoughts and through questioning and listening to responses indicates that they understand the **Learning Intention** and that they know what is required to complete the task through relevant **Success Criteria**.

Providing **meaning** to an activity in this way adds a value, energy and **relevance**. Staff are able to provide feedback based on the learning objectives and includes ways of how to improve.

### **School Statements**

Duns *Guidance on Learning Environments*

Duns *Guidance on Collaborative Working and Group Cooperative work*

Duns *Guidance on Presentation and Feedback (code)*

### **Literature in School**

*Unlocking Formative Assessment* by Shirley Clarke

*Talk Less Teaching* by Isabella Wallace

*Making Thinking Visible* by Mark Church and Ron Ritchard