Active Learning Policy
Broomhill Primary School
Active Learning Policy

Rationale

"The more varied and imaginative the opportunities given to children and young people to use newly acquired skills, the more likely will be the increased motivation and sense of self-confidence that are essential to real and lasting learning." ACE: Building the Curriculum 2

Our Aim

To support children’s development of the four capacities through Active Learning, for example, they can develop as:

- **Successful learners** through using their imagination and creativity, tackling new experiences and learning from them, and developing important skills including literacy and numeracy through exploring and investigating while following their own interests
- **Confident individuals** through succeeding in their activities, having the satisfaction of a task accomplished, learning about bouncing back from their setbacks, and dealing safely with risks.
- **Responsible citizens** through encountering different ways of seeing the world, learning to share and give and take, learning to respect themselves and others, and taking part in making decisions
- **Effective contributors** through playing together in leading or supporting roles, tackling problems, extending communication skills, taking part in sustained talking and thinking, and respecting the opinions of others.
**Research**

We endeavour to apply recent theory and research to maximise children's potential for learning.

To prepare the climate and context for learning we have considered:

- Marslow’s “hierarchy of needs”
- Emotional Literacy (Daniel Coleman)
- Providing children with the tools for learning
- Managing behaviour positively
- Fostering good relationships with parents

To foster and support independent learning we have considered:

- The learning environment
- Development of children’s attention skills
- The teaching and learning cycle
- Effective questioning techniques (Benjamin Bloom)

We apply research from aspects such as:

- Learning styles
- Engaging the multiple intelligences (Howard Garden)
- Mind Mapping
- The connections between music and learning
- The importance of physical development, and how movement is essential in the Early Years
**Active Learning**

“Active Learning is usually associated with the early years. This approach, however, is now being promoted with all children and young people as it accords with the principles outlined in *A Curriculum for Excellence*. In Glasgow we have begun to take the principles associated with Active Learning to develop the curriculum

- Children and young people work on "real-life" or imaginary situations that impact not only on their learning in the classroom but also relate to the real world
- Children and young people work collaboratively and share responsibility for completing tasks and achieving outcomes
- Learning is “hands-on”
- The learning contexts are challenging and help learners develop their thinking

*(TfEL)*

**Good Practice**

**Early Years**

In the early years we endeavour to provide opportunities for:
- Spontaneous play
- Planned purposeful play
- Investigating and exploring
- Events and life experiences
- Focussed learning and teaching
- Active Numeracy
- Active Literacy

**Active Literacy**

We will ensure that:

- All staff receive training on Active Spelling strategies
- Active spelling implemented at all stages
- Active Learning strategies embedded across all aspects of Literacy and MLPS
- Opportunities are provided to combine Literacy with Outdoor Learning
• All learning styles catered to
• Children’s literature is used as context for learning e.g. traditional and contemporary tales in infants, Treasure Island P4/5

**Active Numeracy**

We will endeavour to create opportunities for:

• Learning to be contextualised
• links to be made to real life situations
• Staff training
• Active Learning strategies embedded into Maths across all stages

**Stoylex Approach**

A contextualised approach makes good sense and can encourage the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes. This approach can be used in all stages.

For example:

• P1  There was a Princess Long Ago
• P1/2  The Toyshop
• P2  Fairyland
• P5 Scotland
• P6 Renewable Energy
• P6 The Victorians
• P7 Water
• P7  World War 2 and The Rainforest

**Glasgow Challenges**

Challenge Glasgow provides a contextualised learning approach in the P5 – S2 stages of primary and secondary. Examples of challenges are:

• The Romans - People, past events and societies  P6/5, P5
• Scotland - People in society, economy and business P6
• The Tropical Rainforest - People, place and environment - P6, P7
• World War 2: the Home Front - People, past events and societies - P6, P7
• The Swinging Sixties - People, past events and societies - P6, P7
Further examples include:
- Literacy Mini Challenge
- Numeracy Mini Challenge
- Going for Gold Mini Challenge

We will ensure Active Learning strategies are incorporated into science and social studies tasks.
E.g. Introduction to Archaeology: Scotland's Earliest People P4/5
Understanding Disability P4/5
Electricity and Magnetism P4/5

In addition to all of the above, children will have the opportunity to have their voices heard within the school community via the Pupil Council and Eco Committee.

**Planning**

An Active Learning environment should provide opportunities for children to engage in all these processes.
Planning needs to enable children to:

- Interact with materials
- Use and manipulate materials
- Make choices about how they work with materials
- Use language while they work with materials
- Have the support of an interested adult to encourage "sustained shared thinking"

**The Role of the Practitioner**

- All sessions should include planned and focussed observation, which will inform further planning in line with the Assessment policy.
- Appropriate intervention by the adult is needed to engage the children in the learning process.
- Active Learning sessions should offer a context for the development of language, speaking and listening skills.
- Active Learning can be used as a context for the development of thinking skills, through the use of open questions.
- Active Learning provides a context for the development of different learning styles.
• Children’s personal, social and emotional well-being can be developed.
• A positive attitude and disposition to learning can be fostered.
• Practitioners should focus on learning rather than teaching. This will enable us to concentrate on activities and methods, which meet the children’s developmental needs.

**Assessment**

During Active Learning sessions we put emphasis on learning rather than teaching. We can ensure that we are providing an appropriate curriculum for children, and this requires that practitioners plan to observe, so that we can establish where children are on the continuum of development and what they require in order to move on in their learning. Observation is essential to the provision of appropriate Active Learning sessions.

Observational assessments can be used to identify learning priorities and provide appropriate experiences for children. It is important to have a focus for assessment while keeping an open mind for other evidence. Assessment results should be recorded in line with the Assessment/Recording policy. (See policy)

Through focussed observation we can:

• Find out what interests a child
• Assess their level of attainment
• Assess their emotional well-being
• Assess appropriate challenge in activity
• Understand what hinders progress
• Assess knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes in curriculum areas
• Plan appropriate next steps in learning

Whenever available, teaching assistants could be involved.

**Links with other policies**
This policy links with other whole school policies which address important issues of literacy, numeracy, expressive arts and environmental studies. Also, behaviour, additional support needs, personal and social development and Health and Well-Being. As mentioned above this policy links to the Assessment/Recording policy.