



Developing a love of learning for all. Always ready to learn.

Kinsale Infant School

Learning Policy

‘Are you ready to learn?’

At Kinsale Infant School, we are committed to ensuring effective learning opportunities, through a concept based project approach, linked to the children’s interests. Learning is at the heart of all we do, and we want to develop a love of learning for all in our care.

For learning to be effective, children must:

- Be ready to learn (physically and emotionally)
- Demonstrate our 6 learning dispositions by being curious, creative, resilient, reflective, collaborative and resourceful
- Be enthusiastic and motivated
- Actively participate in learning
- Challenge themselves
- Confidently enter the learning pit and feel safe to take risks and problem solve
- Be aware of expectations (values, behaviour and learning)
- Understand how to evaluate their learning and improve it
- Be able talk about their learning

For learning to be effective, teaching must:

- Based on the principles of teaching backwards (appendix a)
- Be at an appropriate pace (limit teacher talk time)
- Have high expectations for all learners
- Allow time for reflecting on learning and giving valuable feedback
- Ensure all adults are good learning role models at all times
- Encompass all of our learning dispositions
- Be flexible and adaptable
- Be well planned and organised (based on the principles of teaching backwards (appendix a))
- Be pitched to meet all needs and challenge all learners
- Be engaging and motivating, based on children’s interests if possible
- Develop opportunities for independent and collaborative learning
- Involve parents and carers in learning opportunities
- Be supportive of children’s wellbeing

For learning to be effective, learning environments must:

- Ensure all adults and children demonstrate our 6 school values by being enthusiastic, caring, ambitious, thoughtful, respectful and friendly
- Be stimulating (displays to reflect learning prompts **and** children’s work)
- Maintain high expectations across all areas of the school
- Be safe and cater to all needs
- House appropriate and well organised resources, with children able to access independently
- Ensure all adults are focused on moving learning forwards and making observations
- Ensure learning takes place in a variety of areas and ways (inside, outside, small groups, pairs etc)
- Follow whole school expectations and policies (JONK display, Learning pit, behaviour display, VCOP, relevant vocabulary and learning prompts)

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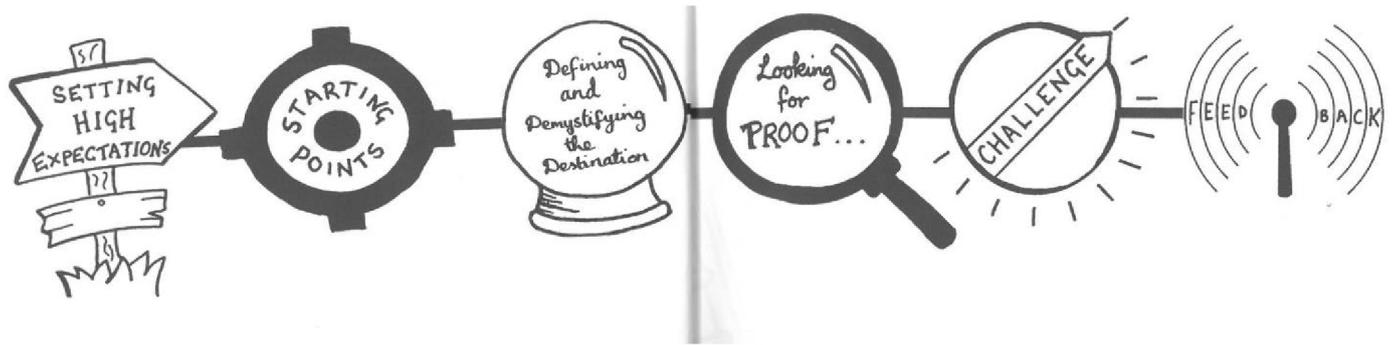
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Signed by Chair of Governors: P Steward

Teaching Backwards by Andy Griffith and Mark Burns



Setting High Expectations: Teachers need to ensure they hold high expectations and become experts in moving each learner's expectations upwards. Teachers need to train learners to become more resilient, more open to feedback, and to hold growth mindsets about their own improvement as learners.

Starting Points: Pre-assessment is one of the most valuable tools in the outstanding teacher's toolkit. Only when the starting points are accurately known can the teacher map out a course to close whatever gaps exist between them and the final destination for which they are aiming for.

Defining and demystifying the destination: Teachers who are clear about the destinations of their learners, and the steps they need to take to get there, are more successful than other teachers. Teachers need to acquire clarity for themselves, considering what passes as high quality work and high quality explanation, which they can then 'unpick' and deconstruct with their learners. A model suggested was the 'Blue Peter Presenter', one who shows learners what they are aiming for up front. However learners must be given the opportunity to look at different notions of quality in different ways, both before and during the learning process, as it helps them to become clearer about how they can move towards making their work the best it can be.

Looking for proof: Thinking like a detective can help teachers to become better at proving that learning has taken place. When teachers improve their skills of questioning, listening, and being harder to fool, they gather better proof that learners are on track, or not. This feedback can then help them adapt their teaching accordingly, just as detectives will adapt their investigations when new evidence comes to light.

Challenge: Challenge lies at the heart of effective learning. Without challenge, learners won't have the opportunity to stretch their potential or get excited about developing their knowledge, understanding, and skills to reach their learning destinations. Carefully designed tasks allow the teacher to gather accurate feedback about which aspects of new learning their class have mastered and expose any learning gaps. Research shows that high levels of challenge raise standards, supporting them to apply their learning across different contexts and remember it more deeply, for longer.

Feedback: This is the feedback that helps learners to close whatever gaps exist between where they currently are and the destination they are aiming for. Teachers should train their classes in the necessary skills and habits so that learners are able to give high quality feedback to themselves, to each other and to their teacher. Effective feedback has to be accurate but it also has to be delivered and received well. Making time to develop this skill step by step is essential. First model how to give high quality feedback, ensuring it is kind, specific and helpful. As the learners' skills develop, the teacher can introduce the activities such as 'be the teacher' to give the learners more responsibility for assessing the work of others. Finally it is essential to develop the skill of slowing down in the classroom and pause and reflect on the feedback they receive, and on the overall progress they are making.