



Christchurch Infant School

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT POLICY

Adopted by Governing Body:	the	December 2021
To Be Reviewed:		December 2024

Ethos of Christchurch Infant School

At Christchurch Infant School, we believe that our children should develop a love of learning and show care and respect for each other within the context of a happy, secure and challenging learning environment.

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

This learning environment policy aims to clarify the expectations at Christchurch Infant School so that we:

- Provide consistency for all learners.
- Challenge learners to give their very best and develop a shared sense of what high standards look like.

The term 'Learning Environment' in this policy includes the classroom, cloakrooms, corridors and any shared areas.

Adults model expectations by keeping the classroom, including their desk, tidy. In classes, storage of items should be carefully considered. If it is not needed on a regular basis, it should be stored in designated holding areas. Where children need to sit i.e. at computers, tables etc., these areas should be clear and accessible. Teachers resources, where possible should be in cupboards.

If children are to access resources independently. Classes must be carefully organise so that children know how/where to access resources and know where to put them back. All corridors and key learning areas should be clutter free at all times.

Interactive Displays

Interactive displays are important because they:

- Encourage children's thinking from enquiry and engagement with learning
- Support the development of sustained, active thinking
- Provide next steps for learners
- Extend learning beyond teacher modelling
- Support deeper learning and reinforce key language development

At Christchurch Infant School, we use learning questions to promote learning by:

- Including open questions in every display
- Linking to AFL and linking learning, applied in different contexts
- Changing questions regularly to promote engagement
- Providing apparatus to solve problems
- All classrooms should have an interactive maths display which links to the current mathematical learning and which is changed at least weekly. This type of display is a great way of introducing learning opportunities such as problem solving. Learners will spend time solving the problems and will apply skills taught in lessons. Resources, such as cubes, should be available if applicable.

Use of Success Criteria

It is important to display examples of what make good features of current learning because:

- Children can access “what a good one looks like” and know what they are working towards
- It models high expectations, to show what success looks like
- Provides a reference to success
- When learners encounter problems, they can self-check and improve
- Show key features, aims and reminders of current learning, so children can see where they are and next steps

We ensure that the success criteria are understood by the children by:

- Introducing success criteria at the start of the project
- Discussing, referring to in learning and expanding with the learners
- Consistently referring back to, referencing throughout the learning process
- Using child-friendly symbols and language
- Being consistent across school
- Using as in-learning assessment tool
- Ensure vocabulary is accurate
- Modelling examples, for example of adjectives

At Christchurch Infant School, we use success criteria by:

- Identifying them in our planning
- Always sharing them with the children
- Always displaying them, in the form of words or symbols
- Using cursive/pre-cursive script as appropriate
- Following the marking policy to celebrate success and identify next steps

Use of Project Areas in Classrooms

Current project areas create an instant reference to a learning theme. They promote enquiry and stimulate, drawing learners in.

Project Areas provide a variety of opportunities in the classroom including:

- Stimulating discussion in lessons linked to a curriculum theme
- Generating enthusiasm towards the project
- Providing children with concrete examples/artefacts that prompt thinking
- Role play and drama opportunities
- Opportunities to display learning questions and link learning across curriculum areas
- Opportunities for children to share resources from their families and homes

At Christchurch Infant School, we expect all learning environments to contain a topic area linked to the current topic. Project areas should be used as reference points by teachers and learners to plan learning opportunities around and should be stimulating and inviting parts of our classrooms. Books, both fiction and nonfiction, should be displayed and used as part of learning.

Modelling Handwriting

We model cursive handwriting where appropriate. If the children are not ready for cursive, we use pre-cursive and print. In learning environments, there should be a variety of styles of handwriting both computer generated and adult/child written.

Examples of handwriting expectations must be available with cursive letters on display. Children's learning should include examples of quality handwriting.

Celebrating Children's Learning

There is no greater accolade for a child than to see his or her learning published on display and celebrated. At Christchurch Infant School, all children are capable of producing learning to a high quality that they can be proud of. We believe in developing a culture of sharing high quality learning so that:

- Children can be aspirational and aim for high expectations
- It provides learning with a purpose – to a wider audience
- It enables us to show progress and a broad range of learning across the curriculum
- Perseverance is developed
- Children are empowered to feel like an author
- We celebrate quality of learning
- We provide good models, proof that it's achievable
- We create a sense of pride in learning and achievement
- Children believe that everyone is an author and a critic

Our non-negotiables about publishing children's learning are:

- We display a variety of children's learning
- We plan for displays
- Displays will contain children's learning
- Displays will reflect the quality outcomes achievable by each individual learner
- Displays will contain learning questions, props or a stimulus for drawing in the audience
- There is always a higher proportion of children's learning to published material
- Learning is labelled and mounted

Displays at Christchurch Infant School

At Christchurch Infant School we pride ourselves on the quality of display learning which plays a significant role in setting out our shared expectations. We believe that display is fundamentally important for the following reasons:

- It celebrates children's learning and achievements
- Presenting learning is a reward in itself for pupils
- It communicates the school's shared high expectation for learning
- Displays can inspire, create interest and generate discussion around learning

- Quality learning which is carefully displayed values children's efforts and is aspirational for all members of our community

All children are capable of producing high quality learning regardless of age, ability or need. Having high expectations and timetabling quality time for children to publish learning for display is the key for achieving good results.

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

Use of photographs in display can also help to show the learning process.

Photographs are really great for those "you had to be there" moments. Always ensure displays contain quotes from children which emphasise what they have learnt and the impact of learning. Alongside this, key vocabulary can be added which links to the learning and a context which explains what the children have been learning.

Passive displays and printable/laminated resources must be kept to a minimum, must be relevant and not visually overwhelming.

Our non-negotiables for all displays are:

- All displays have a title
- All displays are child friendly
- All displays include open questions
- There is always a higher proportion of children's learning to published materials
- Learning is mounted and labelled (with the exception of working walls)
- Quotes and explanations about the learning journey are included
- Vocabulary is shared at the beginning of a project to ensure a child's orthographic store is developed from the very outset
- Published materials are changed regularly to ensure they do not become wallpaper and the purpose is relevant
- Prompts, good examples and models are on display and changed regularly
- Those displays which are interactive should be at a height that children can access safely
- Ensure all staples on display boards are removed before new backing paper is used. Drawing pins are not used in displays, unless the display is up for one day or less, they are used to attach a booklet, or for temporary items e.g. working wall learning. Staples are to be used whenever possible. Work glued to a background mount should be free of loose edges.
- When exhibiting children's work, their first name should always be displayed alongside the piece but **never** alongside a photograph.

Reading Areas

All classroom learning environments should have an inviting place to read. The use of soft fabrics and cushions can soften the area making it more inviting.

The use of key questions, reading focus and featured genres can all enhance the learning experience for learners using the reading area.

Books for children should always be stored in a neat, child friendly way and be easily accessible for children.

Published Materials

There should be a place in each learning environment for published materials, however there must be a higher proportion of children's learning.

Essential published materials are:

- Phonics display which is child friendly and is added to as phonemes are learnt, including red words
- Numberline which is child friendly
- Relevant key words and technical vocabulary which is changed to reflect the current learning
- Common Exception Words/RWI red and green, which are relevant to the children – this may be a focus on the words being learnt that day/week and is accessible to the children
- Behaviour system – please refer to the Behaviour Policy