



Introduction

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 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. Stephen's Primary School, 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. It enables pupils to develop independence as learners, building on good Foundation Stage practice.

This guidance document sets out to clarify the common expectations at St. Stephen's School so that we provide consistency for all pupils in supporting, whilst challenging pupils to give their very best and develop a shared sense of what high standards look like.

As a Christian School we understand the importance of promoting the Christian faith and school values within our environment. Each topic display board will contain a prayer (ideally linking to the topic if possible) and where ever a possible we will promote our Christian distinctiveness within our environment,

Working walls

At St. Stephen's Primary School, we believe that working walls can make a positive contribution to children's learning.

The core purpose of a working wall is to:

- support children's understanding in the process of learning
- provide a visual resource and a reference to scaffold learning
- support current learning and pertinent prior learning
- represent the work in progress, the learning journey steps
- model specific unit modelling for children to access, including children's examples.
- help independent learning
- show progress in learning concepts or steps

- model essential concepts, processes, vocabulary.

Where should working walls be displayed for maximum impact on learning?

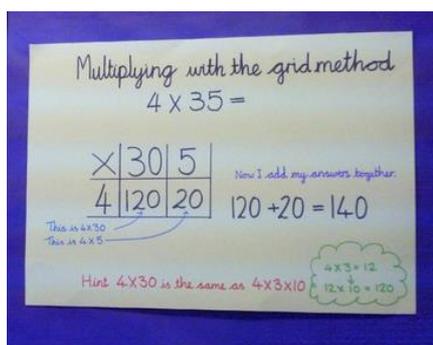
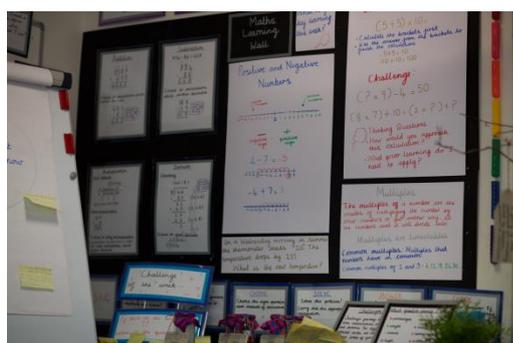
At St. Stephen's, working walls will be displayed where they are visible and accessible for pupils to see and use. This means displaying them in a central place (e.g. next to the white board) where most teacher led input can be seen and where the eye is drawn. A working wall should be the focal point for whole class learning.

How are working walls presented?

Working walls can be a mixture of handwritten (following the schools handwriting policy) or printed posters. They should be written using large sheets of sugar paper, flip chart paper or plain paper. They should represent "real time learning" and be current to the learning area in focus. (E.g. part of a current topic or unit).

How does a working wall lead to quality outcomes for learning?

- Working walls are supportive and interactive
- They are part of the planned learning experience and referred to continuously
- They are referred to by children
- Children can see their work contributing towards the working wall
- They provide 'stepping stones' for children
- Working walls can help children think through 'higher order thinking skills', especially when they contain open questions. E.g. '35 is the answer, what is the question?'



Interactive displays

Why are interactive displays important?

- They encourage children's thinking from enquiry and engagement with learning
- They support the development of sustained, active thinking
- Interactive displays can provide next steps for learners. (E.g. form an enquiry or homework opportunity)
- Interactive displays help extend learning beyond the teacher modelling
- They support deeper learning and reinforce key language development

What is our shared expectation at St. Stephen's using learning questions to promote learning?

- Every display to include open questions linked to AFL, linking learning, applied in different contexts
- Relevant and accessible
- Develop deeper thinking
- Differentiated outcome
- Child friendly and include challenges for more able
- Time to explore and demonstrate how to use (problem solve)
- Open questions are planned for and displayed
- Apparatus to demonstrate; whiteboards, tray of tens and units, variety of structured number cards.



Use of Topic Tables and Interest Tables in Classrooms

Topic tables and interest tables create an instant reference to a learning theme. They promote enquiry and stimulate the senses, drawing learners in.

Topic and interest tables provide a variety of opportunities in the classroom including:

- stimulating discussion in lessons linked to a curriculum theme
- generating enthusiasm towards a topic area or an aspect of a topic theme
- 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.

At St. Stephen's Primary School, we expect all learning environments to contain topic or interest tables linked to a current or 'live' topic. They are used as a reference point by teachers and children to plan learning opportunities around and should be stimulating and inviting parts of our classrooms.



Modelling Handwriting

Our agreed expectation for teacher modelled handwriting is that all staff follow the handwriting policy which is underpinned by the scheme 'Pen Pals.'

- EYFS and Key Stage one pupils and adults are expected to print, following the Pen Pals Scheme
- we use cursive handwriting at all times in key stage two
- all adults model handwriting cursive script when writing anything for children in key stage two
- We talk through it, consistently at all times by every adult

Our non-negotiables for modelled handwriting are:

- examples of handwriting available, children's displayed work shows good example of quality handwriting
- cursive letters are on display. This includes pupils' work, teacher's writing, marking in cursive script on display
- all handwritten work uses cursive script in key stage two
- high expectations from all staff
- all adults to model
- lots of praise for good presentation
- adult written marking is in cursive script in key stage two, print in EYFS and KS1

We achieve consistency through:

- High expectations
- Regular reminders
- Modelling and sharing examples of quality handwriting
- Publishing
- Celebrating good examples
- Children know steps to improve
- Non-negotiable rules / guidelines

Publishing Children's Work

There is no greater accolade for a child than to see his or her work published on display and celebrated. At St. Stephen's we believe all children are capable of producing quality work that they can be proud of. We believe in developing a culture of sharing high quality work 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
- it provides a real live purpose for editing and refining work
- perseverance is developed

- life skills for producing work in education / work are promoted
- children are empowered to feel like an author
- we celebrate quality of working
- we provide good models, proof that it's achievable
- we create a sense of pride in work and achievement

We also aim to link published learning opportunities to cross curricular, problem solving and real life situations. The benefits of linking learning outcomes to real life situations where possible are:

- we build stronger connections to the real world and create a sense of purpose for learning
- we promote lifelong learning
- it cultivates deeper thinking
- children engage in learning better
- it makes links to skills learned and use in real context
- we are able to draw on what children already know
- children can relate to learning better
- it makes learning purposeful and real.
- It gives children a reason why they are learning skills

We create a shared ethos of publishing children's work and aiming for quality outcomes by:

- having high expectations for everything we do
- being aware of reviewing, editing and improving work
- encouraging a sense of pride in end product, purpose, passion, perseverance
- scaffolding to ensure that children achieve their best
- believing that everyone is an author and a critic

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

- we display a variety of children's' learning

- we plan for displays and publishing
- we make time for publishing as a learning outcome
- displays will contain published children's work
- displays will focus on quality outcomes
- all displays will be mounted according to the display policy
- where possible, displays will link to real life problems or have a cross curricular theme
- displays will contain learning questions, props or a stimulus for drawing in the audience
- children will be involved in peer assessing work for display



Book Corners

Book corners should be inviting, stimulating places to learn 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.

Any books in poor condition should be removed from book areas. Children found deliberately mis-using books will receive letters to their parents requesting the replacement of books or a monetary contribution to replacing the book.

Pupils books should always be stored in a neat, accessible, pupil friendly ways using storage containers, table trays or individual pupil trays. This ensures that pupil books are always maintained in good order and do not become damaged.

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.

Our non-negotiables for book corners are:

- banded books are grouped together.
- Non – fiction books categorised with clear labelling.
- Fiction books categorised into either genre, author surname
- Engaging space – use of fabric, cushions, rugs
- Display which shows the banded book children should be reading.
- Area for them to reflect on their reading e.g. book review board



Reflection areas

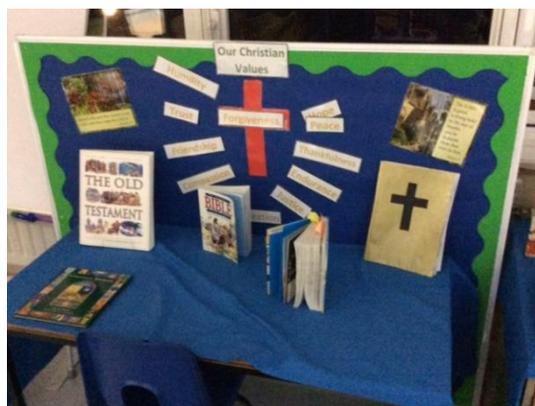
Reflection areas should reflect the school's Christian distinctiveness. It should be an area for all children to be able to reflect on their beliefs and values as well as promoting the school's Christian values. The Reflection areas should reflect the schools Christian value with artefacts, key questions and images to help build children's understanding.

Reflection areas should be an engaging space within a prominent part of the classroom. It should be an area that can be accessed by all with resources to support learning and reflection.

Our non-negotiables for Reflection areas are:

- placed in a prominent part of the classroom where everyone can access it.
 - Artefacts such as religious texts and/or artefacts

- Prayer tree used on a regular basis and prayers displayed are written to a high standard
- Key questions and/or vocabulary displayed to support children in their thinking
- Current CV displayed in stand



Agreed by Governors

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "R.P.F.", written over a horizontal line.

Policy Due for Review:

September 2018