



LEARNING WALKS

2009-2010

How we can share good practice and learn from one another

Policy on Learning Walks

A learning walk should have many different purposes

- To **monitor or audit** practice throughout the school. Providing a 'snapshot' view
- To **share good practice** and promote consistency
- To **check for progression** e.g. a learning walk to focus on how ICT is taught throughout the school.
- **Training** e.g. display for learning
- To provide **quality time for reflection** and to stimulate professional discussion.
- To ensure colleagues see the practice across the curriculum and learn the school they work in

How learning walks will work at The Elmgreen School

- **The Senior Leadership Team will decide on a focus prior to a learning walk** e.g looking at lesson starters, establishing a calm climate, student engagement, plenaries, group work, observing new initiatives such as APP, questioning, no hands up etc
- **The purpose** and the focus will be shared with the whole staff team including support staff in the week before each 'learning walk week'
- **A timetable** will be published which will display teams of teachers, middle and senior leaders scheduled to carry out learning walks and the dates of the weeks when learning walks will take place
- **Learning walks** will take place TWICE each term (total 6 walks per year) and will be carried out over a whole week on each occasion

- **Each curriculum** area will be visited by a pair of observers who will spend approximately 15 minutes visiting lessons
- **The observers** will visit lessons individually and in pairs – this will be decided by the observers prior to the learning walk. Observers will be reminded by the leadership team when the focus is announced in the week before the walks take place to prepare for their walk*
- **Each curriculum** area will only be visited once by only one team (pair of observers) during the week
- ***The** observers will decide between themselves the day and time (lesson period) they will carry out a learning walk in their designated curriculum area
- Feedback from learning walks will be recorded on a feedback form, passed to and analysed by a member of the leadership team and shared with the whole staff team including support staff to share good practice, positive news and to celebrate what we do well at The Elmgreen School

Who goes on a learning walk?

- Staff
- Students
- Other professionals

What are 'the rules'?

There are certain ways to behave on a learning walk:

- Always stand to the side or the edges – don't distract from the teacher or block someone's view.
- If the children are working independently or in groups observers can either mingle and ask questions or simply be a 'fly on the wall'
- Don't chat amongst yourselves whilst the teacher or pupils are addressing the class!
- Photographs are not permitted during a learning walk

What might be the outcomes?

- Short written report highlighting strengths and areas of excellence
- Identification of good practice and a plan on how to extend that across the school
- A change of policy, practice or routines

- Further information required to gain a more detailed picture

Remember

Our aim is to enhance children's learning through providing a stimulating learning environment

A rich learning environment can enhance learning by:

- Stimulating children's creativity, curiosity and thoughts
- Providing a bridge between the student and the subject content
- Building self-esteem, self-worth and confidence
- Informing, motivating, influencing and exciting the children about topics

Checklist

Here is a basic classroom checklist that can be used when assessing the learning environment that you create

- The room is clean, tidy and organised
- Drawers and resources are clearly labelled
- Materials/resources are in working condition and appropriately stored
- Display boards are appropriate to the topics currently being taught
- Display boards are intact and appropriately presented
- Display boards will stimulate the children's learning
- Side tables and tabletops are used for interest tables and to consolidate or to stimulate or further learning, not to pile books and papers on
- The children have a place for their personal belongings
- The space in the room is utilised to encourage maximum learning power
- There are clear learning areas/zones within the room, for example, book corner, numeracy area, and literacy area
- The temperature is between 68 and 72°F and there is good air circulation
- Classroom walls are a light colour

- The focal point of the room (where the board is) is kept clean, simple and aesthetic. The side and back walls and surrounding tables are where the most important stimuli are positioned
- Whiteboard pens and flipchart pens are used
- Lighting is natural (not fluorescent) The focal point of the room is well lit
- Music purposefully used at appropriate times
- Water is readily available to learners
- Resources are accessible and encourage independence, table trays containing a range of stationary
- Blank learning tools readily available for children to access and choose from
- There are clear learning areas/zones within the room, for example, book corner, numeracy area, and literacy area where possible

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Leadership Team Support