



CHATMORE
BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

**LEARNING
&
TEACHING
POLICY**

BE *unique.*

BE *inspired.*

BE *transformed.*

Revised November 2022

#BEMORE

Introduction

Chatmore_2022

Be unique. Be inspired. Be transformed. #BeMore

The purpose of this policy is to inform teachers on Chatmore's expectations regarding teaching and learning practices. It serves to outline the following:

- Our transformative approach to learning
- Expectations of the teacher
- Planning & delivery
- Class Environment expectations
- Evaluating teaching and learning

We advocate a transformative approach to teaching and learning, strongly informed by research evidence into what works for the Chatmore classroom. We recognise the importance of personalising learning to the needs of individual children and classes. Teachers are free to use their professional judgement in this regard. We are interested above all in doing what has impact and what will promote a positive relationship with learning.

Our Curriculum Guide lays out our learning tools, key intentions for pupils' learning, the content we teach them and the ways we organise learning. The purpose of this policy is to set out the principles and practice of great learning. It should be read in tandem with our:

- Curriculum Guide
- Assessment Guide
- Book & Work Presentation Guide

Chatmore's Approach to Learning

Over time numerous theories about how best to teach have influenced our profession. At Chatmore, we believe in a transformative approach to learning (Mezirow, 1991). Our ultimate goal is to develop a love for learning in our students and support them in being ready for their futures. This theory supports a learner-centred approach. Furthermore, it facilitates effective learning methods, learners' autonomy, cooperation, and participation during the process of transformative learning.

Jack Mezirow says that “transformative learning is the process of effecting change in a frame of reference”. Our frames of reference are the experiences that make us who we are. This is our culture, our education, our families and our habits. We all have set frames of reference that we learn and work within that shape how we feel about others and the world. These start to develop from birth.

It is our job as educators to not only take into consideration these frames of reference when planning for the children, but also to try to help the children think and learn outside of them. When we stretch the children to think about things in a way that they have never considered or we expose them to an idea that is completely unfamiliar, we are encouraging **transformational learning**.

The children and families who walk into our doors are looking for a better future. It is our job to push them towards this through new and innovative approaches to education and family service. We cannot think about teaching and learning in the same old ways, if we want our children to have successful futures.

How Transformative Learning Lives at Chatmore

Target/Benefit	Idea	At Chatmore
Critical Reflection	Individuals need to think critically about their experiences, which in turn leads to a perspective transformation. This process enhances self-awareness and promotes a deeper level of self-understanding.	Students are encouraged to discuss new ideas or opinions. Using critical thinking skills, students can ask questions and explore new thought patterns. Through the scaffolded nature of our curriculum, new connections can be made towards a more well-rounded understanding and application of concepts and ideas.
Rational Disclosure	A form of discussion with other people that focuses on personal and socially held beliefs and assumptions, which are conducted in a logical and rational manner to pinpoint any biases, blind spots, or incongruencies which allows the individual to consciously address them.	From the youngest age, we encourage resilience and flexible thinking which supports learners in recognising their own misconceptions. Learning from others (not just the teacher) supports this goal and students are encouraged to seek understanding.
Centrality of Experience	This component encompasses one's life story so far and the experiences that they have had.	By creating a safe learning space where all perspectives are respected and heard, we can all learn about each other's story. This is critical to developing positive relationships with learning and each other. Our work with the family requires us to be unbiased and open-minded, allowing for true transformation to occur.

In all we do, we must remember that a student's journey is not defined solely by academics. Our strengths lie in so many areas and these areas must be nurtured. At Chatmore, we aim to develop the personal dispositions and thought patterns that provide our students with the skills they need to have a strong sense of self, all while being able to have meaningful discourse with those who hold a different set of beliefs, experiences or ideas.

Transformational learning principles can span every and any subject and can be critical in reaching learners who think differently. By embracing these concepts, we strengthen our bond as a teaching team, a class and a school community.

At Chatmore we do not classify learners according to 'ability' in a permanent way.

It is common practice in schools to use language such as 'tops', 'highers', 'middles', 'lowers' etc to describe children in terms of their perceived 'ability', as if this were a permanent thing. This narrative strongly influences practice. Teachers commonly give different levels of 'differentiated' work to different ability groups and separate children into different ability 'sets'.

We recognise that in all our classes pupils are at different stages of learning. We see this as a reflection of their current ability, not as something innate or inevitable. Neuroscience emphasises the plasticity of the human brain. Our capacity to do or understand anything can improve.

Good teaching, self-belief and practice are far more important than predisposition. Research evidence shows that setting by ability has a detrimental impact on the majority of learners' self-esteem and academic outcomes (see IoE Best Practice in Grouping Students). It is self-fulfilling, condemning pupils in lower sets to lower outcomes because of the deterministic and limiting expectations it places upon them.

Instead We Believe in Success for All: Our brain capacity, intelligence, or ability are not fixed. We must think and speak with a growth mindset, inspiring students to achieve more. As teachers we should never write students off or label them as 'low ability' or 'less able'. Our talk and praise should be focused on the efforts children are making, not their outcomes.

At Chatmore, we do differentiate work and set by ability in limited, temporary and careful ways. We do so as a sensible, logistical response to teaching a cohort of children who are currently at very different levels.

However, we seek other ways whenever possible. In particular, we focus on giving children choice from a range of different challenges, trusting them to know themselves best as learners, lesson to lesson.

Remember:

- We develop confident, ambitious growth mindsets. No child should leave Chatmore thinking that there is no point trying in a subject because they just can't do it.
- We understand that when a child is struggling, this is not because they are intrinsically 'low ability' (except in some cases of children with significant special needs), but because they have a gap in prior knowledge, making it very difficult for them to access the new knowledge we are trying to teach. We do not give them a simplified, 'differentiated' version of the new knowledge. We work out what their gaps are and fill them.

Student Retention & Promotion Policy

At Chatmore, we rarely make decisions to retain or promote students as we are able to differentiate effectively within the year levels. Typically students are placed in the appropriate year level upon entry, whether it be a year behind, ahead or at age level.

However, there are exceptional cases where a student has a set of circumstances that warrant promotion or retention. A key factor of retention decisions is a student's attendance. Students who miss more than 20 days of school in a school year have missed a substantial amount of learning time.

In both cases, parents will be notified via a meeting about the school's observations and a decision will be reached collectively on how to proceed.

Students facing retention will require a contract to be signed so that parents understand the critical steps needed to continue to progress the student. This may include tutoring, specific concept coverage, or additional learning time and modifications. Parents should understand that in most cases, families who follow the recommendations may avoid retention dependent on student performance.

Expectations of a Chatmore Teacher (or educator)

At Chatmore, our primary requirements for a teacher or educator are:

- to understand and embed the Personal Learning Goals and school expectations
- to care for each student and their family
- to give 100% when engaged with children, always viewing them for what they can be

Teachers are expected to act professionally in all settings and speak positively about the students. In order to maintain a positive school culture where the Personal Learning Goals are embedded, teachers are expected to demonstrate these in all they do and say in public and private. This is critical to effective teaching and learning and providing a safe space for children to try, fail and succeed.

In addition to the above, it is the expectation that teachers will:

- Implement the chosen curriculum allowing our children to develop academically and personally
- Plan lessons that enable and challenge students to experience knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum
- Set clear objectives, success criteria, support and challenges to reach their potential and beyond (differentiation)
- Use assessment data to inform future planning
- Establish a good routine for each lesson: greeting the students, setting expectations for the lesson, clear activities, timers for transitions, reflection and closing, etc.
- Be accountable for, and consistently practise, the Behaviour for Learning Policy.
- Make students aware of how learning fits into the big picture.
- Use well-judged teaching strategies, resources and learning styles matched to the students' learning needs, including a variety of independent, pair and group activities for learning.

- Scaffold students' learning through modelling and collaborative learning where this is appropriate.
- Systematically and effectively check students' understanding using a variety of effective AfL strategies, anticipating where they may need to intervene to consolidate learning (see Assessment Guide for more information)
- Set appropriate home learning that matches students' needs to reinforce and extend what is learned in school.
- Provide a neat, tidy and stimulating learning environment that celebrates students' achievements and promotes high standards.
- Contribute, as a team member, to the development of the school
- Commit to reflection and improvement of pedagogy

Planning & Delivery of Lessons

All teachers are asked to provide plans in Planbook, an online planning tool. Medium and Long Term Plans should be created in word documents **and uploaded to Planbook** and OneDrive.

Individual Lesson Plans

It is essential for teachers to have an outline completed for each lesson to document what was covered and the intent of the learning activity. While Chatmore requires all teachers to have clear lesson plans completed, we do not require onerous or overly detailed plans.

If a teacher must plan for a substitute, the lesson plan should be complete with full detail, including differentiation strategies, materials, etc. to ensure continuity of learning.

Medium Term Plan (6 weeks)

This planning tool is critical and mandatory. Each teacher should have a detailed, half-termly medium term plan outlining what topics/areas will be covered week by week across a term for all taught subjects. It should include the learning objectives, assessment, outings, materials, etc. See Appendix for example.

Long Term Plan (whole school year)

Each teacher will be required to prepare a whole year plan to outlay the topics and pacing for each taught subject. This will need to be reviewed by the school Head during planning time in August/early September. The Long Term Plan should look at each half-term as a whole unit and outline in simpler terms the topics covered.

The aim is that these should be reviewed yearly rather than newly created each year. This will ensure consistency in the learning journey as students move through the year levels.

Classroom Environment

A clean, clutter-free classroom allows for optimal learning to take place. Chatmore allows teachers to be creative with their learning spaces and does not have many restrictions on classroom set up and organisation. Classrooms should be a stimulating (not overwhelming) space with current examples of student work and learning tools displayed.

In a classroom, Chatmore looks for:

- Tidy and clutter free learning spaces, with as many surfaces as possible clear for learning
- Tidy and organised teacher desks
- Current displays of student work and learning tools - in the classroom and hallways (students should be able to talk about everything that is on the walls of the school)
- Personal Learning Goals display using Chatmore's PLG cards
- Assessment framework displayed (Beginning/Developing/Mastering/Innovating)
- Family Points jars visible and accessible
- Purposeful use of school resources and materials
- Some form of quiet/reflective space (can be outside of the classroom, too)
- Organised system for student workbooks and materials (i.e. work boxes, subject specific trays, etc.)

Evaluating Teaching & Learning

Chatmore has the benefit of being a small school where learning and teaching can be easily observed many times throughout a day. In almost all instances, we take a supportive approach to evaluation and aim to avoid micromanaging.

A great deal of trust is placed in a Chatmore teacher to uphold the professional standards and expectations of the school. We aim to provide teachers with the professional autonomy to try new approaches and techniques without the pressure of being evaluated at all times. We believe this translates to more impressive outcomes. This approach allows teachers to feel more comfortable within the school and make professional adjustments and observations before being corrected by school leaders.

With that said, documented teacher appraisals and feedback are part of a successful school model. Teachers at Chatmore have classroom visits from school leaders (i.e. Head, Governors) at the beginning and end of the year. Written summaries are provided after the visits and any adjustments are discussed together. Formal appraisals are also completed.

Should the school feel a teacher is not performing at the expected level, official forms will be used for observations which will include lesson plan reviews and a formal meeting. After support plans have been put in place, performance will be evaluated again. Should the school not see adequate improvement, we will support the staff member in exploring other options as an educator with or outside of Chatmore.

Appendix

Medium Term Planner - Term 2.2							
WEEK							
	2-NOV	9-NOV	16-NOV	23-NOV	30-NOV	7-DEC	14-DEC
<p>Curriculum /Theme</p> <p>(Generally, Home Learning goes out on the Wednesday of that week, due on the Monday)</p>	<p>Building a Village Entry Point & Knowledge Harvest</p> <p>Visitor: City Engineer?</p> <p>Geography Task 1-3</p> <p>Geography Task 4 - Home Learning</p> <p>Adaptability, Communication, Enquiry, Thoughtfulness</p>	<p>Building a Village</p> <p>Language Arts Link</p> <p>History Task 1</p> <p>History Task 2 - Link with other IPC School?</p> <p>History Task 3</p> <p>History Task 4 - Home Learning</p>	<p>Building a Village</p> <p>Technology Task 1 - Field Trip</p> <p>Technology Task 2 & 3 combined</p> <p>Technology Extension Task (sustainable materials)</p> <p>Science Task 1 - Home Learning</p>	<p>Building a Village</p> <p>Science Task 2 & 3 (same day)</p> <p>Society Task - second part (self-sustaining) is home learning</p>	<p>Building a Village</p> <p>Society Task Presentation - Politician visit or BEDC link (self-sustaining services)</p> <p>Int'l Task 1 & 2</p> <p>Home Learning - Plan Village/Town/City Model</p>	<p>Building a Village</p> <p>Exit Point - Make their own village</p>	<p>Last week of School Christmas Play, class parties, etc.</p>
<p>IPC Skills Assessment (skills that will be assessed using AfL and Rubrics)</p>	<p>G3.14 G3.19 G3.22 G3.18 G3.16 G3.24 G3.15 G3.20</p>	<p>G3.14 H3.11 G3.15 H3.17 H3.10 H3.09</p>	<p>T3.04 T3.09 T.3.05 T3.10 T.3.06 Sc3.31</p>	<p>Sc3.02a Sc3.02d Sc3.02b Sc3.02e Sc3.02c So3.05</p>	<p>So3.05 I3.04 I3.01 I3.07 I3.02</p>		
<p>Math</p>	<p>Multiplication - 6-9 times tables - mental multiplication - multiplication with regrouping</p>	<p>Division - quotient and remainders - odd/even numbers - with regrouping Chapter Review</p>	<p>Word Problems & Math Vocabulary - addition, subtraction, multiplication, division</p>	<p>Adding & Subtracting Money</p> <p>Metric Measurement - meters to cm; km to m</p>	<p>Metric Measurement - kg to g; ml to l</p> <p>Word Problems - Measurement</p> <p>Bar Graphs & Line Plots</p>	<p>Fractions - comparing fractions - adding/subtracting fractions - fractions of a set Term Review Test</p>	

Literacy	Text Structure - story writing recap - 5 parts - paragraphs (intro to paragraphs) Grammar - subordinating conjunctions - similes & metaphors	Punctuation - commas, direct speech Grammar & Literacy Terminology Review	Text Structure - Story Writing with dialogue Review of basic word structure and punctuation	Text Structure - non-fiction writing - paragraph structure	Text Structure - non-fiction writing - paragraph structure metaphors Non-fiction writing piece due	Card/greeting writing (thank you cards) Metaphors	
International Mindedness	Host vs home country Continent/country/city	"agree to disagree" concept	debate; how to debate	immigration, migration, emigration, repatriation	TATW Planning	holiday celebrations in different countries	