ST ETHELBERT'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

Learning Environment Policy 2018

Date of Review: October 2018
Date of Next Review: October 2019

Learning Environment Policy

1. Purpose and Aims

The learning environment has a significant influence on learning. It gives children a clear message about how we value them and how we value learning.

The Catholic ethos of the school, including our mission statement, should be at the centre of the way we plan for and organise the learning environment. The school and classrooms should provide a welcoming, inclusive and stimulating environment where all children feel valued, secure and able to contribute.

This policy aims to ensure that:
- There is a consistent approach to the learning environment across the school, reflecting the high expectations that staff and pupils have for learning and progress.
- The learning environment promotes an inclusive and collaborative approach to learning so that all pupils are supported in achieving their potential across the curriculum.

2. General expectations

- **Organisation:** All classrooms and corridors should be kept clean, tidy and free from clutter. Classroom and school routines should support children value and respect their learning environment and make a contribution to keeping it clean and tidy.
- **Language**: All classrooms should be "language rich" environments in order to promote and extend children's understanding and use of language. Displays should include key words and statements, open-ended questions, prompts and scaffolds related to the curriculum or to highlight key learning points. Where appropriate, dual language labels should be included.
- **Resources**: All resources should be clearly labelled and organised to that they are readily available to the children in order to promote independent learning and choice. Resources should include appropriate books, models and artefacts to support the children's learning in relation to the curriculum areas and current topics.
- **Classroom layout**: The physical layout of the classroom should support and promote inclusive, interactive teaching. It should allow for flexibility for working in different contexts (e.g. individual work, paired work, small group work as well as whole class teaching). This is to ensure that speaking and listening and collaborative learning are at the centre of teaching and learning. Every child should be seated so that they have a clear view of the interactive whiteboard/main teaching area.

3. Expectations for Display

Display, both inside and outside the classroom, contributes significantly to the creation of a positive school ethos, reinforcing high expectations for success and achievement.

At St. Ethelbert's, we have two different approaches to display:
- *Classroom displays – promote and support learning*
- *Corridor/hall displays – celebrate and value pupils' achievements*

3.1 Classroom displays
Classroom displays should focus on supporting learning or exemplifying the learning process rather than on children's final outcomes. However they will include examples of finished work

in order to demonstrate what pupils achieved and how they achieved it. (Refer to additional guidance below and appendix for examples)

Each classroom should have the following displays:
   i.   Literacy working wall (see guidance below)

   ii.   Numeracy working wall (see guidance below)

   iii. Assessment for learning display (these can be on separate boards if space allows)
            a. Literacy targets
            b. Numeracy targets
            c. Self and peer-evaluation (questions, scaffolds, prompts)
            d. Marking symbols

   iv.   Religious Education
            a. Linked to the learning in the current R.E topic
            b. Prayer table (refer to R.E policy). Children should be encouraged to contribute their own items of personal significance to the prayer table over the course of the year
                   i.   Liturgical cloth colour appropriate to liturgical season
                   ii.   Bible appropriate to the children's age
                   iii. Candle
                   iv.   Crucifix on or near the table
                   v.   Appropriate statues (optional)
                   vi.   Book of children's prayers or reflections
                   vii. A living object (plant/flower)
                   viii. A box/basket for children's own prayers or intentions

3.2   Guidance and Expectations for Literacy and Numeracy Working walls

Each classroom should have a literacy and numeracy working wall to promote engagement in learning and help pupils develop an understanding of what is expected of them.

- Working walls should be used to record and visualise the learning process.

- Teachers and pupils should refer and add to working walls throughout the unit of work/topic.

- A working wall is a "work in progress"; it is not always necessary to back or mount all work. Mounting of work is at the teacher's discretion when the teacher considers mounting of work contributes to the learning.

The key features of successful working walls:
- They are updated regularly to reflect the learning journey over a unit of work/topic
- Display learning objectives/success criteria for the unit/topic that can be referred to throughout the process.
- Display a WAGOLL ("What a good one looks like"!) which can be referenced back to success criteria throughout the learning process. This ensures children have a clear understanding of what they are trying to achieve.
    o WAGOLL model/s provided by the teacher at the start of the unit
    o WAGOLLs produced by children over the course of the unit
- Include children's ideas and work showing progress towards the end goals
    o "KWL" grids – What we already know, what we want to know and what we have learnt
    o Post-it notes
    o Speech bubbles
    o First drafts and revisions

- o Examples of self and peer-evaluation
- Display (removable) key vocabulary which you will expect children to use in the lessons. Vocabulary can be supported with definitions, examples, images etc to support understanding
- Provide scaffolds (e.g. sentence starters, alternatives to "said")
- Make links to previously taught skills, knowledge or understanding
- Break down methods or steps, showing them visually

3.3 Corridor/hall displays

Corridor and hall displays will be used to celebrate and value children's achievements across the curriculum as well as promote the Catholic ethos of the school as exemplified by our mission statement.

These displays will primarily consist of children's final outcomes/finished work but may also include examples of the learning process, in order to demonstrate children's learning and progress over a period of time.

Minimum expectations for corridor/hall display
- The display is backed and has a border
- There is a clear title that references the topic/learning/curriculum area
- The year group and class name should be clear and included on the display
- A variety of work is displayed which reflects the range of abilities and achievements within the class. This is essential in creating an inclusive learning environment.
- Finished work that is displayed should always be the best that an individual can achieve and it should be largely free from errors. Emergent writing and work in progress are also valuable for display and need to be labelled as such so the context is understood.
- All 2D work is mounted appropriately (e.g. double-backed) with mounts trimmed in a straight line.
- All work should be clearly labelled with the child's name (pupil or ICT label)
- Displays should always be accompanied by labels, which should:
  - o Explain the context of the learning
  - o Explain the learning process
  - o Reinforce learning and key vocabulary
  - o Make links to other topics/areas of learning
  - o Ask open-ended questions
  - o Contain prompts which encourage pupils to interact with the display
- Where possible, dual language headings and labels should be used.
- Pupils should be involved in the creation of these labels where possible.
- Drapes, hangings and other 3D objects should be used to create visual interest where possible

The implementation and effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and evaluated by the Senior Leadership Team on a regular basis. This will take the form of pupil/staff voice, work scrutinies, learning walks or as part of a lesson observation.
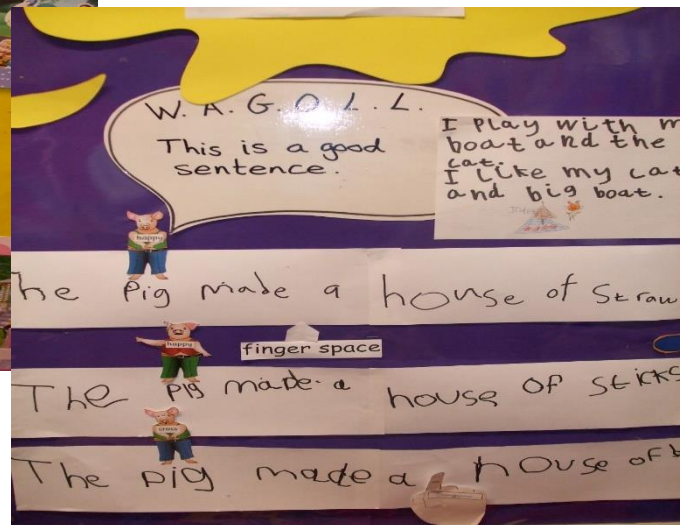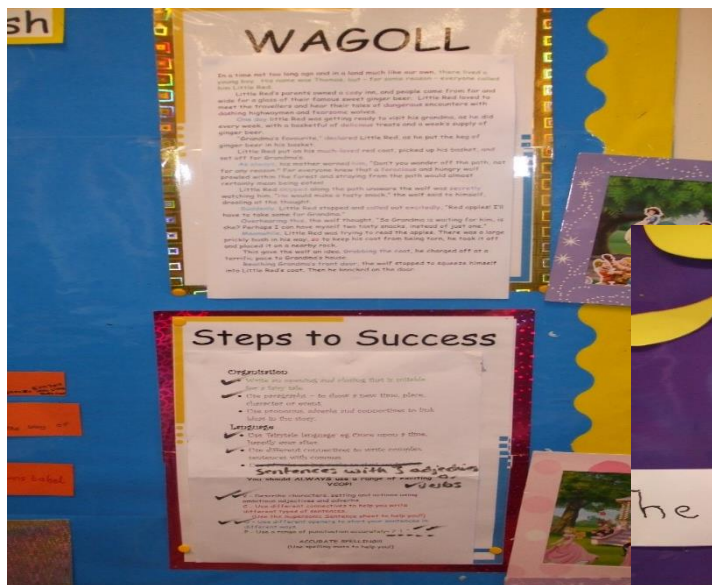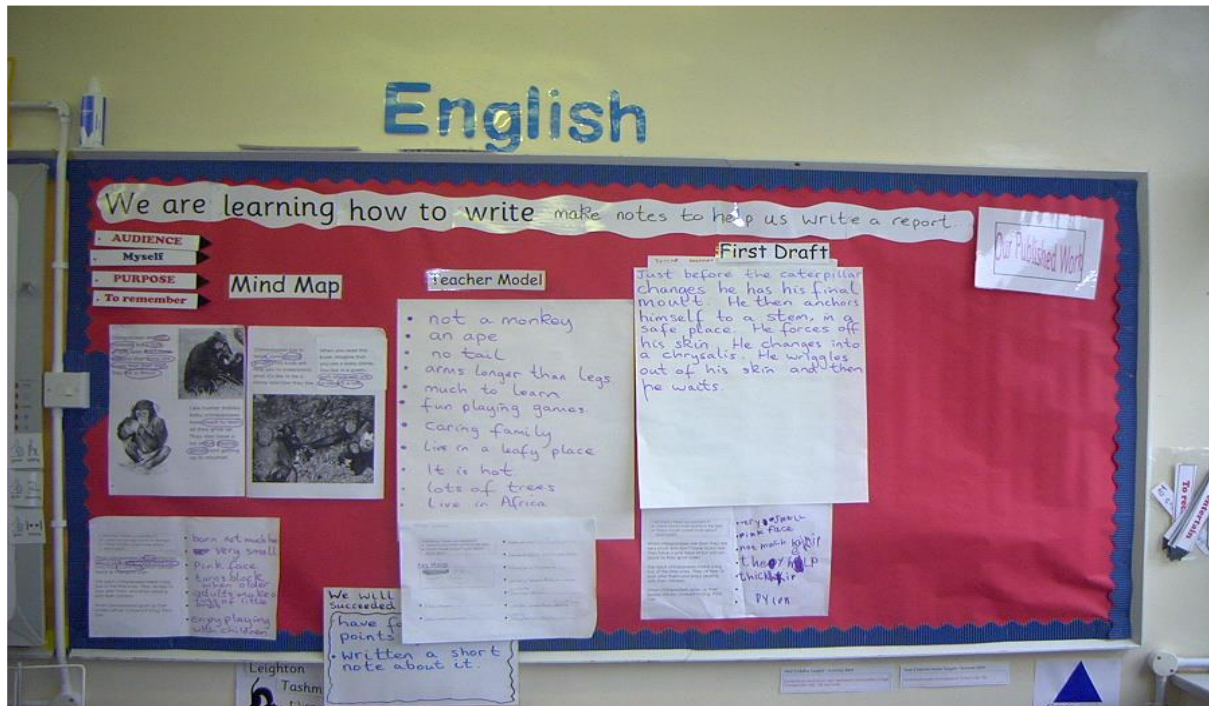
APPENDIX OF EXAMPLES

Examples of Target Displays
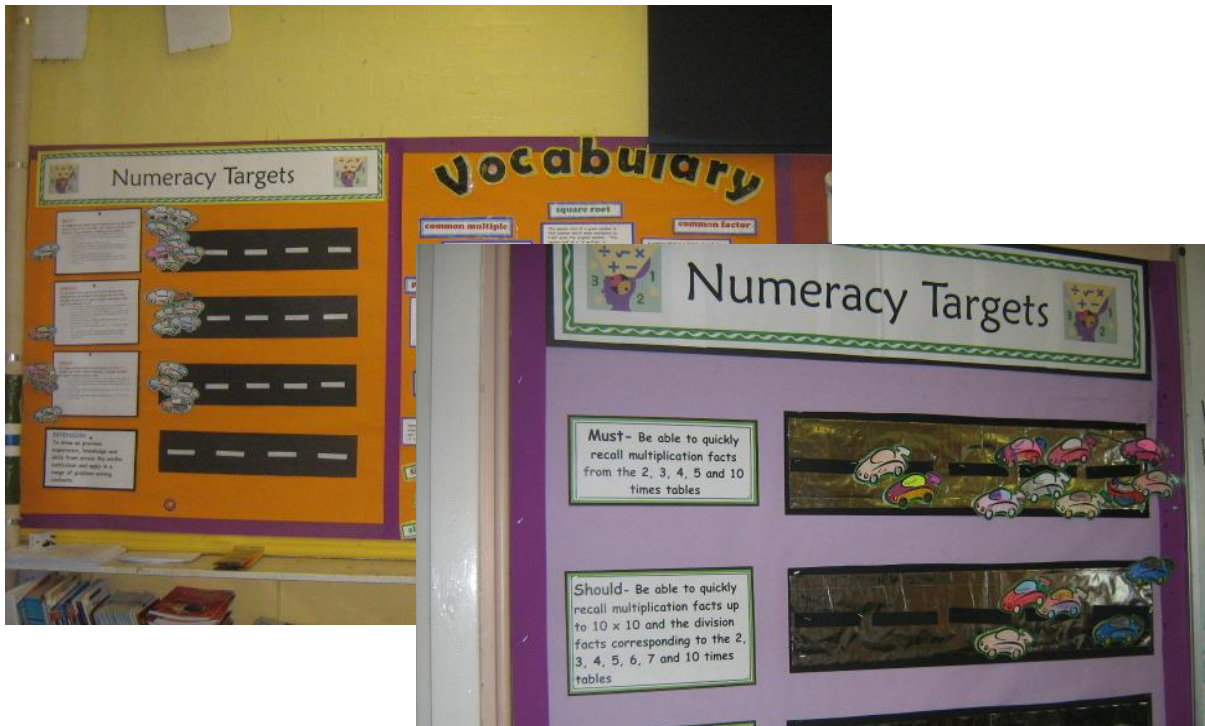
Good examples of working walls can be found at:
http://www.educationworks.org.uk/news/4-school-improvement-news/32-working-walls-in-context.html

Examples of Literacy Working Walls

Examples of Numeracy Working Walls