

# BHAKTIVEDANTA SCHOOL



## Learning and Teaching Policy

The Bhaktivedanta School's priority is for every child, whatever their background or their circumstances, to have the support that they need in order to be healthy students learning in a safe environment so that they can make positive contributions and achieve success.

At our school, we are constantly researching and implementing programs to find out what works best for our children and act on our findings. This Learning and Teaching Policy is therefore a dynamic document that will evolve as new research informs our best practice to achieve these outcomes for our children.

We accept that the most significant impact on learning comes from inspired teaching. Our teachers aim to inspire confidence with a passion for, and sound knowledge of key learning areas and the child's stage of development. Teachers have clear expectations, are enthusiastic and are well organised and consistent in their approach. Teachers collaborate with their colleagues and plan effective lessons employing appropriate strategies to ensure differentiation. Each lesson has clear learning intentions and success criteria, which are shared or developed and understood by the children. We believe that children work best when they have a clear understanding of the lesson and when faced with challenging, authentic, relevant, and achievable tasks. When motivated, students develop high self-esteem and become knowledgeable and principled thinkers who are caring and committed to their learning thus enabling them to achieve their full potential.

All our students, at the Bhaktivedanta School should have an equal opportunity to achieve their full potential regardless of race, colour, gender, faith, disabilities, special educational needs, or socio-economic background.

We believe that children benefit greatly from being totally involved in the process of learning and teaching through formative assessment and excellent feedback. Children work best in a stimulating environment conducive to learning, where they feel valued and secure.

Given that the single most important factor in children's learning is excellent teaching, we commit to ensuring that our teachers:

1. Know how to deliver excellent teaching displaying best practice
2. Are committed and creative in planning and delivery
3. Are motivational in their delivery
4. Enjoy teaching and have a passion for learning
5. Are lifelong learners and continue to engage in professional development
6. Set high expectations and high achievement
7. Understand how thinking and questioning develop learning and embed Thinking Curriculum into their teaching and learning
8. Show total professionalism
9. Seek out and accept constructive feedback from colleagues, pupils and parents
10. Are leaders in the school

11. Work in partnership with parents and all stakeholders in their teaching
12. Deploy agreed, active behaviour management strategies

Learning and Teaching Strategies will be employed to ensure that children achieve their full potential. We agree that our teaching will be characterised by:

- Planning and preparation that is clearly linked to the National and Queensland Curriculum
- The use of Assessment for Learning evidenced by teachers and ongoing assessment and collation of relevant data to inform best practice
- Differentiation to cater for students of all abilities
- Clearly identified learning objectives and success criteria
- Continuity from the previous lesson and progression to the next
- Use of ICT and various programs to enhance learning
- Well planned lessons that are structured, timed and clearly demarcates the salient parts of the lesson i.e. starter, main body, plenary session with the use of Gradual Release of Responsibility Model
- The teacher's delivery of the lesson that shows a good grasp of the subject being conducted at a brisk and lively pace where the teacher is articulate and confident
- Students active interaction through a balance of purposeful teaching-initiated and pupil-initiated activities.
- A range of different types of lessons which suit the learning objective e.g. practical (where the pupils are learning from first-hand experiences), visual, dramatic group work, investigative (in Mathematics and Science), Computing/ICT- based etc.
- A complete coverage of all subjects; which is carefully timetabled; where the content is pitched correctly for those children; which is cross-curricular or single subject where appropriate; which is accessible to all through differentiation and the provision of the necessary resources.
- The use of resources which are prepared in advance and readily available and accessible to students
- Establish a set routine and use encouraging language and praise
- The deployment of Educational Support Staff who are actively involved in the lesson and aiding pupils' learning. They are involved in prior planning and preparation and have a good knowledge of the needs of individual pupils
- Providing constructive feedback to students either by the teachers or by their peers

Given that the students at Bhaktivedanta School are in our care and are the single most important feature in our school, Children will therefore:

- recognise and appreciate excellent teaching
- take risks

- be motivated to learn and achieve high standards
- display creativity
- laugh and have fun
- engage with learning and develop a full range of learning styles
- become questioners and be able to develop learning through thinking effectively
- give and receive feedback effectively
- enjoy learning and school
- discuss their learning with their parents
- be life-long learners
- make principled choices
- achieve the best they can

At our school, we agree that our children's learning will be characterised by:

- students' responses that are exploratory, wide ranging, cross curricular and not constrained by convention
- students' feelings that they are able to take risks, are not afraid to make mistakes and happy to learn from their mistakes
- students' whose responses are enthusiastic, thoughtful and well considered, revealing their intense involvement and engagement in their learning.
- learning styles that are active, exploratory and involved, where our students are given frequent opportunities to learn in their preferred style, whether visual, oral, auditory or kinaesthetic
- students who are proud of their work, which reflects the highest standard possible
- where each student is encouraged to produce work that is their personal best, and is encouraged to do better all the time, and to share and celebrate their achievements with their peers
- their study and research skills where home learning helps to foster a love of learning
- supportive parents who take an interest in their child's learning enabling them to progress both academically and pastorally
- students encouraged to participate in a wide range of extracurricular activities

Learning is enhanced through a great classroom environment. Across our school we aim to ensure that all classrooms, group learning areas and whole school areas are spaces that everyone can use to learn and be proud of and should have The Learning Environment.

We recognise the importance of providing a stimulating, interesting, welcoming, safe and challenging learning environment. The rooms are organised and resourced to provide learning opportunities. Children are taught how to access the equipment independently. Classroom display walls for English, Mathematics and Inquiry. This should reflect the work currently being studied in each of the subjects. It should be interactive and include: Student questions and wonderings, key vocabulary, visuals and artefacts to stimulate thinking. A display board for Religious Education and Ethics and Philosophy will be included. Resources in the classroom will be labelled and neatly organised and easily available for students and hands-on learners.

Bhaktivedanta School will ensure that children have pride in their work, achievements and set themselves high standards.

Teachers will:

- encourage children to develop a conscientious approach to their work
- demonstrate the value of children's work by good display
- utilise the school's rewards policy effectively
- provide opportunities for students to share out-of-school achievements.

To ensure that children are happy, teachers will:

- make time to listen
- praise
- be kind, caring and nurturing
- encourage and positively reinforce good work and behaviour
- ensure a safe classroom environment where children are secure enough to take risks in their learning

### The Role of Parents

The Bhaktivedanta School aims to work in close partnership with parents. Self-evidently, parents know a great deal about their children, and they have particular insights about their strengths, skills, interests, preferences, aspirations, anxieties and difficulties. Accordingly, the importance of meaningful communications and co-operation between the School and the parents can hardly be overstated. Many aspects of good teaching directly influence learning and so these aspects are common to both good teaching and learning.

Children's learning is enhanced by a positive relationship between parents and school. Parents can contribute by COMMITTING to and BEING:

- interested in their child's learning
- aware of and following school procedure and rules
- willing to support activities related to the school
- aware of their child's role within the school

Ensuring that their child is ready for the school day by:

- being punctual
- having required stationery
- having labelled uniforms, books and PE kit
- wearing the appropriate school uniform
- encouraging independence
- having a good learning space at home to complete homework

Communicating with staff effectively by:

- reading and responding appropriately to school letters
- making appointments to see staff about any concerns when necessary
- providing an emergency contact number
- attending parent's evenings, events and school meetings
- informing the school of any holidays and absences

All educators will use key prompts for planning and delivering lessons and these include:

- Am I clear about what I want the children to be able to do/understand/know at the end of the lesson?
- Is the learning objective in child-friendly language?
- Have I thought about the steps to success and planned the success criteria in advance?
- Are the children going to be involved in formulating the success criteria?
- Have I thought about the questions I will need to ask to deepen children's understanding/assess learning?
- Have I thought about how I am going to engage and motivate the children at the start and during the lesson?
- Have I thought about how I will meet the needs of all learners?
- Are activities challenging and designed to deepen understanding?
- How are students going to assess their own learning or that of their peers?
- Have I thought about how I will meet the needs of the EAL learners in my class e.g. what visuals will I use in the lesson?
- Am I giving the children thinking time and talking time before answering questions?

- Am I going to be introducing new vocabulary to the children?
- Have I made sure children are not going to be sitting passively for long periods?
- Have I included any time for pupils to respond to marking from previous lesson?
- How am I going to meet the learning styles of all pupils?
- Have I got a balance of teacher instruction, intervention and children working independently?
- How am I going to conduct my plenary?
- Have I planned opportunities for pupils to talk about their learning in pairs and groups?
- How are pupils going to assess their own learning or that of their peers?

There is a high level of staff involvement in children's chosen activities and play. There are also planned age appropriate 'focused activities' for specific children, or groups of children providing a balance of child and adult initiated activity.

Suitably differentiated activities are organised to meet the learning needs of each child. There is some whole class teaching, happening at the beginning and end of each session both morning and afternoon to ensure that children have access to daily phonics sessions, mathematics, and story and shared writing.

We regularly monitor our provision to ensure every child's learning is well supported and builds on children's own home, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. We use materials, equipment and displays, which reflect the home languages, cultural and ethnic diversity of the children, the local community and wider world. We work towards supporting bilingual children's development in their home language as well as English. We ensure that bilingual children have access to the full curriculum and are involved in all the learning experiences offered giving the extra support needed so that they can participate and understand. Children will be learning English through real life, every day, and meaningful experiences and through interacting with other children and staff. Sanskrit learning and conversation will take place weekly.

All of the principles stated in this policy applies to students from prep to year six and we recognise that learning begins at birth and continues throughout life. We acknowledge that everyone has the ability to be a competent learner, regardless of disability or other special needs. At Bhaktivedanta School, we will continue to ensure that our students are given best education so that they can achieve success and be great citizens of the world.