



Willow Brook Learning Environment Policy

Introduction

Fully inclusive classroom environments can both support and enrich the learning of all children. As well as being vibrant and welcoming, the classroom environment can be a learning tool, 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 Willow Brook, 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 and enables pupils to develop independence as learners'.

This guidance document sets out to clarify the common expectations at our 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.

Ofsted have claimed that ***the classroom environment is one of the most potent teaching aids for children. It should be visually stimulating and lively and should help to develop and engage children's learning.***

An environment enables effective learning. An outstanding classroom environment is when the use of space is adapted to match the learner's needs.

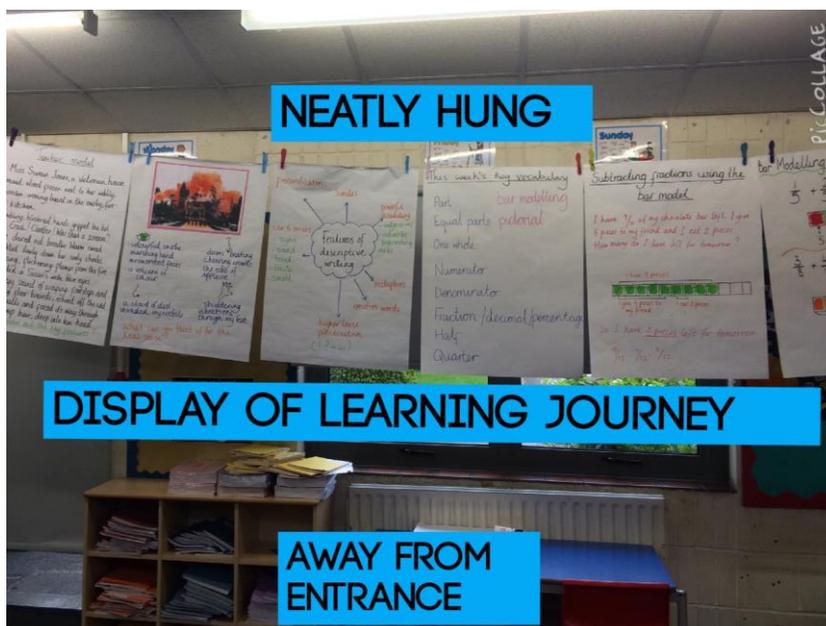
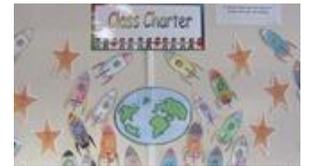
All classroom environments will provide the following at an appropriate level for the age of the children working in the classroom (**List A**). The following will also be used within lessons to support teaching and learning. **List B** represents what is desirable.



Willow Brook Learning Environment Policy

List A

- Working wall (Numeracy and Literacy);
- Prompts, ideas and good examples of work that can be generated during lessons are displayed and referred to, to support future learning;
- Children's work displayed;
- Wall for Science, Topic;
- Children's targets displayed/in their books/sent home to parents;
- Next steps for learning– what do children have to be able to do to get to the next stages in their learning. These can be on tables, walls and/or white/Smartboard;
- Learning Objective clearly displayed (on IWB);
- Steps to success on the IWB- keep referring to these in lesson; ;
- Clearly labelled trays;
- Class Charter;
- Clear and visual 'What Makes Good' English display- to include the entire punctuation pyramid and examples of vocabulary (wow words), connectives and openers appropriate to the level of children being taught. These could include words/phrases from children, higher level words, phrases 'borrowed' by books children are reading in their Guided Reading/Literacy/History (etc))
- Key words and subject-specific/technical vocabulary displayed and discussed for a variety of curriculum areas. Please note, these needs to be updated regularly to ensure vocabulary links to an appropriate learning context;
- Key questions are displayed and referred to in lessons (not only important for children but also enables adults working with children to be clear about teacher expectations);
- X Table grids (either large on display or individual all tables) where relevant;
- Number lines (again differentiated for year group);
- Alphabet/sounds/phonics/blends displayed for KS1;
- Visual timetable (particularly important for SEND pupils);
- Motivation display (Rewards / Sanctions);
- Exciting and enticing reading corner.



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 well.



Storage of Pupils Books

Pupil's books should always be stored in 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 dog eared or worn. 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. By contrast, where books are left on the teacher desk or scattered around a room, this conveys confusing messages to children that their books are not valued and makes it harder for pupils to access work books independently.

Key Areas

Key areas for the storage of equipment must be clearly defined and easily accessible for pupils. They should always be organised and tidy. Recommended key areas include: Art Resources; Maths Area/Resources; Topic Table/Role Play Area; Outdoor Learning Spaces (EYFS/KS1), etc.

List B

- Plants;
- Birthdays;
- Posters - taking account of children's interests;
- Class monitors.....Notice board with groups on.

Work in Progress: The 'Working Wall' Approach

What is a Working Wall? It is the public display of the learning process and evolves as each day progresses. It is not static. It can increase effective learning and teaching. The purpose of the working wall is to support children's independent writing. It evolves as a unit of work unfolds, and is not intended to be a tidy display of finished work.

Well planned working walls can:

Support independent working and learning: think of the Working Wall as an extra adult in the classroom. It can help support children who become stuck and direct children to new tasks when they have self-assessed that they have successfully finished an activity.

Support whole class and guided group teaching: models and images, key vocabulary and useful prompts are displayed and referred to by the teacher to support children in their understanding.

Celebrate success in Mathematics/Literacy: examples of successful work and photographs of children working successfully should be displayed to show that work in Mathematics/Literacy is valued, and to support learning. It is also a good idea to allow children to make contributions to the wall; post-it notes are an ideal resource for this.

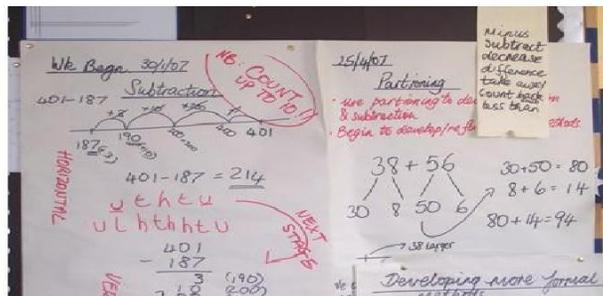
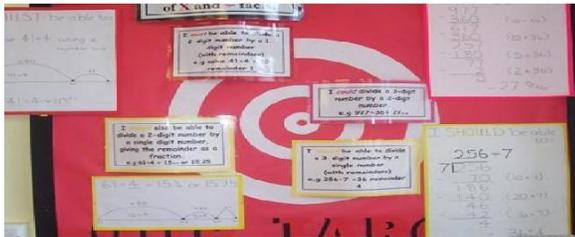


Willow Brook Learning Environment Policy

What could a Working Wall include?

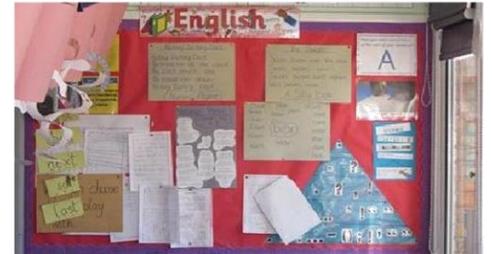
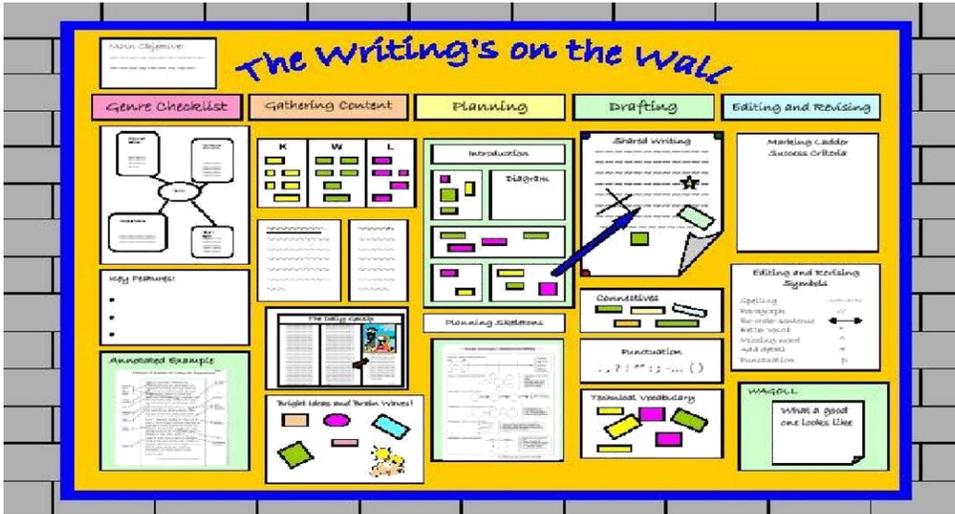
- Objectives of the current unit (i.e.: ‘This week we are learning.....’). This will change as the unit of work move on;
- Targets;
- Teacher modelling
- Key S2S;
- Models and images linked to an objective or target;
- Key vocabulary/Mind maps;
- Practical mathematical resources linked to an objective or target;
- Examples of children’s work linked to an objective or target (building up to eventual completion) – guided/independent;
- Photographs of children working;
- Child selected activities that they can borrow from the working wall to support or extend learning;
- An opportunity for children to interact with the display e.g. through responding to a ‘Problem of the week’ by attaching sticky notes to the display, or exploring relevant practical resources.

Some examples Working Walls (Numeracy)





Willow Brook Learning Environment Policy

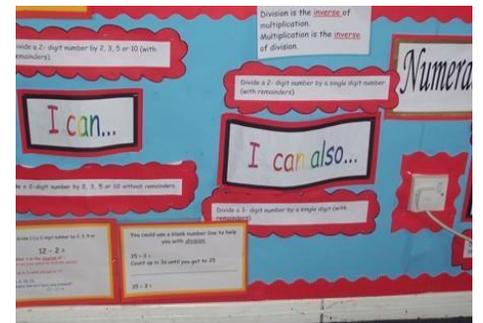


A working wall is:

- Situated close to where I most often teach;
- A place where children can find key information about their current learning;
- Added to over a series of lessons;
- A place where anyone can make a contribution;
- A storehouse of information and ideas – vocabulary, guidance, images, diagrams;
- Frequently changed to be current;
- Adapted to suit purpose;
- Age related;
- A place to display targets;
- Explicit acknowledgement of children's contributions;
- A place that has visual impact;
- Confidence building;
- Constantly used and referred to;
- A place for planning / structure of children's work;
- A teaching aid reinforcing teaching points;

A working wall is not:

- A display;
- A permanent fixture;
- A receptacle for every bit of information relating to a topic/ series of lessons.



Willow Brook Learning Environment Policy

Displays at Willow Brook Primary School

At Willow Brook, we pride ourselves on the quality of display work which plays a significant role in setting out our shared expectations. We believe that display is fundamentally important for the following reasons:

- It celebrates pupils' work and learning achievements;
- Publishing pupils' work well is a reward in itself for pupils;
- It communicates the schools' shared high expectations for learning;
- Displays can inspire, create interest and generate discussion around learning;
- Quality work which is carefully displayed values children's efforts and is aspirational for all members of the Griffin Trust community.

Provided below are some practical guidelines for displaying children's work. These guidelines are taken from what we already do and some new ideas, intended to support all staff in achieving the best quality displayed work at the school.

1. Aim for quality (and do not accept second best!)

All pupils are capable of producing quality work regardless of age, ability or need. Having high expectations and timetabling quality time for pupils to publish work for display is the key for achieving good results. If a pupil finds it difficult to sustain longer pieces of work for publication, publish extracts or even a small section of work.

2. Keep it simple

A good quality display is not about the brightness of the backing paper or the size of the title but more about the quality of the work. It should speak for itself and should stimulate interest.

3. Aim for symmetry

When planning a display, plan the display from a centre point of the board and have a fixed horizontal 'top line' for the display. Work outwards from the centre, keeping the top lines level. This creates a symmetrical effect which is easy for the eye to orientate.



4. Using drapes and props

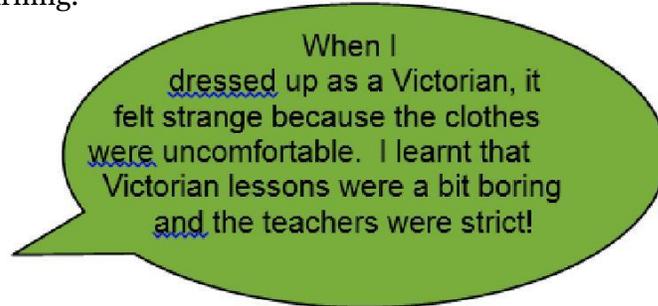
Drapes and fabrics can really enhance a classroom display, generating interest in the display and creating textures for pupils. The same is true for 3D objects and materials.

5. Using photographs in display to help show the learning process

Photographs in display are really great for those “you had to be there” moments. Especially when the learning takes place over a period of time, photographs are great for capturing the learning processes.

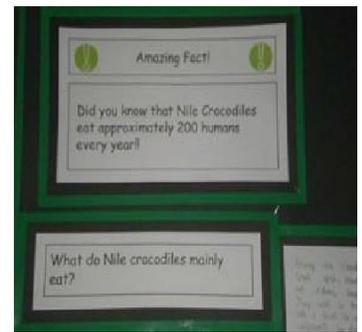
6. Quotes, Context and Key Vocabulary

Quotes from children can emphasise what they have learnt and the impact of learning. Alongside this add any key vocabulary linked to the learning and a context which explains what children have been learning.



7. Insert Key Questions or Challenges

The text in this display encourages pupils to find out more. It sets readers the challenge of finding the key information contained in the display in the same way as a good information book would.



Interactive maths displays are a great way of introducing learning opportunities such as problem solving. Pupils will spend time solving the problems and will apply skills taught in the lessons.



8. Get creative with the borders and let the work speak for itself

To add your own personal touch and emphasise creativity, try using different style borders to make your display stand out.

The borders on the display are made from newspaper. This compliments the theme of newspaper reports.



