



<b>Title</b>	B15 Research Policy
<b>Purpose</b>	To describe the principles and ethics for research informed practice at Oak Lodge School
<b>Relevant to</b>	Whole School
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Headteacher
<b>Introduced</b>	2/2011
<b>Modification History</b>	Nil
<b>Related Policies</b>	A9 Curriculum Policy A10 Equality and Diversity Policy A17 Performance Management Policy B1 Policy on Policies
<b>Date due for review</b>	2/2015
<b>Relevant Governors' subcommittee for review</b>	Curriculum
<b>Agreed at full meeting of Governors on</b>	31/03/2011
<b>Signed by Chair of Governors</b>	
<b>Filed as</b>	B15 Research Policy Vs1_0211

## **Rationale**

At Oak Lodge the promotion of enquiry and research is a strategic priority. We believe that school-based enquiry and research can make an important contribution to self-evaluation, self-improvement and the professional learning of staff, which impacts positively on outcomes in the classroom.

## **Core Principles**

Lawrence Stenhouse defined research as 'systematic enquiry made public'. He argued that research enquiry aims to solve problems by the achievement of understanding (Stenhouse 1980, pp1). Graham Handscomb and John MacBeath developed this concept and proposed that schools could become research engaged by placing research activity 'at the heart of the school, its outlook, systems and activity' (Handscomb and MacBeath, 2003). They suggest that a research engaged school has four main features:

- It has a research orientation
- It has a research rich pedagogy
- It promotes research communities
- It puts research at the heart of school policy and practice.

Research engagement in a research-engaged school is:

- focused on school improvement
- about improving teaching and learning
- shared among all staff
- supported by school leaders and governors
- seen as a professional development activity
- used for educational decision making
- embedded in school systems and culture
- a platform for the development of learning communities, both within and outside the school
- an opportunity for collective reflection on pedagogy, assessment, curriculum and leadership
- involvement in large and small research projects
- a link between schools and education policy

At Oak Lodge we believe that: -

- Research will establish a connection through national and international communications for evidenced based practice in the education of CLDD and ASC
- Research-informed practice gives teachers the ability to contribute to whole-school improvement for the benefit of their students.
- Research provides a forum for the sharing and dissemination of knowledge to promote the development of SEN policy.
- Research should be relevant to the school, as well as the individuals directly involved.

- Research projects can supply the opportunity for teachers to investigate and interpret elements of their practice in a detailed and systematic fashion
- Undertaking/facilitating research in their classrooms gives teachers the opportunity to find out more about how students experience learning. This can impact positively on their pedagogical understanding and improve their practice
- Research engagement can open a dialogue between school leaders, teachers, support staff, students, parents and governors. It can improve understanding of the needs and concerns of all groups and help to create a 'learning community'
- Research engagement can provide sound professional knowledge for educational decision-making. It can help to explain cause and effect and provide a means of investigating the effectiveness of new initiatives, technology or teaching methods
- Becoming engaged in research can inspire curiosity, interest and professional discussion among staff in a school thus facilitating a shared ethos built on improving and evaluating practice.
- Research engagement can contribute to career development leading to staff receiving recognition for enquiry activities as part of their CPD portfolios. Experience of research is likely to help those seeking promotion, especially for anyone wishing to become a CPD coordinator, Advanced Skills Teacher, or Headteacher.

It is important that school's capacity and motivation for research engagement is supported through partnerships with key organisations. We already work closely with Kings College London, The London Institute of Education, Middlesex University and the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust. We are committed to building and developing our existing links, whilst further expanding our range of research partners.

### **Research Ethics**

'Research Ethics' refers to the moral principles guiding research, from its inception through to completion and publication of results and beyond – for example, the disposal of data and physical samples after the research has been published.

Whether a piece of research is carried out by one of our partners or by members of our school community it is important to make sure that the rights, dignity, health, safety and privacy of research subjects and the integrity of the educational environment is protected. We also need to protect the health, safety, rights and academic freedom of researchers and the reputation of Oak Lodge School as a centre for properly conducted, high quality research.

Members of the Oak Lodge school community carrying out school-based research must ensure that: -

Staff and subjects are informed fully about the purpose, methods and intended possible uses of the research, what their participation in the research entails and what risks, if any, are involved.

The student's views about participating in any study must also be sought where applicable, which may be indicated through choice, engagement or reaction to a situation. Research practitioners will ensure that students do not become distressed as a result of their participation in any research activity.

No student whatever their ability, can give fully informed consent to taking part in research, as they cannot be fully aware of the implications or consequences of agreeing to participate. Therefore parent/carers permission must be sought and they must be given the opportunity to ask any questions relating to the research and at any time have the right to withdraw their child from any study without giving a reason.

The confidentiality of information supplied by research subjects and the anonymity of respondents must be respected.

The independence of research must be clear, and any conflicts of interest or partiality must be explicit.

The school will also ensure that any study carried out by researchers from universities or other institutions of higher education has received prior approval from the relevant Research Ethics Committee.

### **References**

Handscomb, G. and MacBeath, J. (2003). *The Research-engaged School*. Chelmsford: Essex County Council  
Stenhouse, L. (1980). 'The study of cases', *British Educational Research Journal*, 6, 1, 1-6  
Sharp, C., Eames, A., Sanders, D. and Tomlinson, K. (2005). *Postcards from Research-engaged Schools*. Slough: NFER

Barry Carpenter and Jo Egerton, (2007) *Evidence Based Practice in Action*.