



Teaching and Learning Policy

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“Learning is driven by what goes on in the classroom”

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Teaching and Learning policy

KEY THEMES

Teaching and learning are the core purpose of what we do. High quality learning, teaching and subsequently achievement are what we want for every student within the academy. We believe that the more that we have a shared understanding of what constitutes effective teaching and learning, the greater our success will be.

The key themes of our teaching and learning policy are:

The basics – consistent expectations are our most powerful tool to ensuring a climate for learning in all classrooms

A climate for learning – students make most progress when they feel respected and valued, and are developing a broad set of life-skills.

Lesson structure – clearly structured lessons promote learning

Differentiation – our classes are made up of individual learners with a variety of needs; teaching and learning should take account of students from different cohorts and with varied abilities

Assessment – assessment gives students clear guidance about the standard of their work and how they can improve

Professional development – all teachers have both the right and the responsibility to engage in sustained and relevant professional development throughout their careers

We expect all pupils to achieve well due the excellent teaching that is delivered by staff. We make no excuses for our learners, and expect high standards from them. In excellent lessons we see:

BASICS

Setting the tone for a purposeful learning environment is critical. Students learn, progress and develop in a structured and stimulating classroom. Our shared expectations are set out below.

Punctuality and regular attendance are essential:

These are the current timings of the school day:

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Lesson 1 | 08.25 – 09.25am |
| Lesson 2 | 09.25 – 10.25am |
| Registration/Form Time | 10.25 – 10.45am |
| Break | 10.45 – 11.00am |
| Lesson 3 | 11.00 – 12.00pm |
| Lesson 4/Lunch | 12.00 – 1.30pm |
| Lesson 5 | 1.30 – 2.30pm |
| Enrichment (Not compulsory) | 2.30 – 3.30pm |

Weekly Assembly Rota

| | |
|-----------|---------|
| Monday | Year 7 |
| Tuesday | Year 8 |
| Wednesday | Year 9 |
| Thursday | Year 10 |
| Friday | Year 11 |

Sanctions for lateness apply if students late after the specified lesson start. The student is issued with an **C4 detention** in line with our positive behaviour policy. Teachers should note lateness in SIMS, persistent lateness will lead to a detention being set.

Students must enter and leave the classroom in an orderly way at the instruction of the teacher:

- Students should not enter the room unless a teacher is present or they have been asked to do so by a member of staff
- Teachers should welcome students into the room
- Students must take coats off, have books, planner and equipment on the desk and bags on the floor
- Students are dismissed at the end of the lesson by the teacher wearing their blazers

Students wear appropriate uniform at all times:

- Teachers are asked to check uniform and jewellery as students enter the room. Eating or chewing, or uniform infringements should be challenged in line with academy policy.

Taking a register sets the tone for the lesson

- Aim to take a register within the first 10 minutes of every lesson: if not formally, by calling out names, it is important that students know the register is nevertheless being taken. It is a legal requirement.
- A formal record must be kept and completed – staff who fail to complete their register in due time will be issued with a carbonated copy of the request to do so. Repeated offenders will be dealt with according to academy policy.
- When students are absent check the absence list and inform student services or the inclusion team

The seating of students is very important and must be at the direction of the teacher. Strategic seating can challenge underachievement and promote learning

- The teacher will consciously decide upon and plan the seating arrangements for students in order to maximise progress
- Seating plans should be available for all classes
- **Seating plans should reflect the academy Kagan structures and be changed after each assessment window**
- Seating arrangements should be changed to suit different activities as appropriate and allow students to work independently and collaboratively as required
- A seating plan should be available with cover work when the teacher is absent

Classrooms that are clean and uncluttered set the tone of a purposeful learning environment: a stimulating and engaging environment can be used as part of the learning process within a lesson

- Any graffiti should be reported, furniture moved to normal places at the end of each lesson, teacher desks kept clutter-free
- Displays are encouraged to be changed regularly, relating to current student work, keywords, levels etc. (use of support staff)
- Appropriate health and safety procedures should be followed at all times; no teacher or student should ever stand on furniture to deal with displays
- Rooms should be kept well-ventilated

When appropriate behaviour for learning is made explicit, students make most progress. Students should be taught to:

- listen to each other
- adopt various roles in groups
- be prepared to volunteer their thoughts and opinions
- respect the values, ideas, contributions and beliefs of others
- give honest and positive feedback to each other

Thinking time allows students to make higher quality responses

- When asking questions to the class, teachers should pause or give students a specific time to consider their responses

Rewards recognise achievement and motivate learners

- Teachers should praise much more than criticise using formal and informal approaches
- Formal rewards are: issuing a merit sticker for the student planner, issuing of an achievement point for good work, increased or sustained effort; phoning home; work on display; sending a postcard/letter home; inviting the student to see the Subject Leader/SLT for praise; reward in assemblies;
- Informal rewards are: congratulating students privately or publically within a class; saying 'well done' to the whole class; positive written feedback on written work; positive comment in student planner; phoning home;

Learning progresses faster when disruption is minimised.

The teacher should manage disruptive behaviour by:

- Giving a recognised non-verbal cue (eg eyebrows raised, frown), referring to the students by name to draw them back into the lesson and **issuing a C1,**
- **If students fail to respond continued disruption should be addressed through the positive behaviour policy in line with academy consequences policy**
- For longer term improvement of disruptive behaviour, teachers should prompt further discussion with the student, parents, learning leader or pastoral staff outside the lesson environment

To support staff with their teaching and learning pedagogy the academy has:

- An Assistant Principal with responsibility for **Teaching, Learning and Assessment (Deep Learning)** who can offer support within lessons, with planning or any other aspect of teaching. **An extended leadership team who will work with department to support them challenging the most Able, numeracy and literacy across the curriculum.**
- Data that is easily available and regularly updated for staff to use in order to ensure appropriate stretch and challenge and differentiation. Staff use class profiles to identify underperforming students and are responsible for putting in place interventions to support them.

- A network of Teaching and Learning Professionals within SLT and MLT who can support staff with the development of their practice
- CPD time calendared throughout the year that is differentiated for staff to develop their practice through appropriate CPD
- Feedback from lesson observations given with developmental targets set. These targets form part of the CPD plan for the following term

Effective lesson planning takes account of students' prior learning. Dividing lessons into sections helps to maintain pace and challenge. Lesson planning should be based on the marking done.

An appropriate structure could include:

- A starter activity to engage students' interests
- Introduction of new learning
- A variety of assessment opportunities to embed, assess and deepen learning
- A review of learning using AFL

A learning question (LQ), levelled outcomes and success criteria allow students to engage with the process of learning:

- A "Learning Question" must be shared with the students at the start of every lesson
- Levelled Outcomes must be set at the start of each lesson. This will usually happen at the beginning of the lesson but could happen at other stages in the lesson
- Success criteria related to levels/grades must be shared with students.
- Ensure that success criteria are shared and modelled throughout lessons.

This can be done in a variety of ways: written or projected onto the board, orally; written by students in their books; printed on hand-outs

Opportunities for reflection upon lesson outcomes and progress throughout and at the end of the lesson improves learning.

Outcomes and success criteria must be revisited throughout and at the end of the lesson by:

- Students reviewing their learning against the levelled outcomes
- Skilfully questioning to assess attainment (using, for example, Bloom's Taxonomy) and set targets for further progression
- Monitoring learning throughout lessons in order to continuously assess the pace and strength of progress and to intervene to address misconceptions by reshaping and modifying teaching to meet students' needs
- Using Hot spot marking and Verbal feedback stamps can be used as appropriate to support practice
- Using plenary phases and opportunities for assessment to assess progress and summarise learning.
- Praising progress and rewarding achievement through comments and the academy's praise and reward systems

Students learn in different ways – teaching and learning which incorporates a variety learning styles will engage a wider range of learners and create a more stimulating diet. Students should use collaborative learning strategies as modelled through the academy in order to facilitate active learning. We therefore actively encourage teaching and learning that is lively and takes risks (light bulbs on doors) – where students demonstrably learn. Recognising this and planning for it provides stimulus and is inclusive.

- A range of teacher/student-led and student-centred assessment opportunities should be used
- Students should have the opportunity to work in different ways, such as individually, in pairs, small groups, whole class situations – shoulder partners, face partners

- Leadership, group work and teamwork should be promoted using effective models where students know their roles and which give students accountability, understanding of group dynamics, and opportunities to lead

DIFFERENTIATION

Differentiation takes into account the needs of all learners and plans to ensure that all learners are set challenging goals and make expected progress. We recognise that:

Different students have different needs, related to influences both within and beyond the classroom. Awareness of the needs of specific groups will enhance the provision for individuals

- Teachers will be aware of the needs of specific groups such as SEND, MABLE, EAL (English as an additional language), PP (Pupil Premium), Looked After children, Eth (Ethnicity), and gender and will provide the appropriate support
- SIMs mark-sheets, SISRA and SMID filters highlight these students in individual classes
- Each subject area has specific strategies for the extra support and challenge that MABLE students will receive. The subject MABLE Lead Teacher oversees the provision across the academy. The academy MABLE policy can be found on the website
- Further information on specific students' needs (such as statements, SEND profiles) can be found on SIMS

Lesson planning should take into account the variety of students' abilities and will aim to maximise progress for all. Teachers are expected to use class profiles to assist with their planning to meet individual student needs. Differentiation can take many forms and can often be grouped into differentiation by process (how students learn), and /or differentiation by content (what students learn).

Differentiation by process includes:

- Providing a range of alternative tasks
- Deliberate grouping of students according to tasks (e.g. grouping all of the most able students together to work on a particularly challenging task; using 'jigsaw' grouping; mixed ability grouping for peer teaching etc.)
- Assigning roles to individual students (e.g. leader, scribe, questioner, spokesperson etc.)
- Support provided by a **learning facilitator** or additional adult
- Varying degrees of challenge within teacher questioning and response

Differentiation by content includes:

- The qualification/tier students are studying for
- Developing and adapting resources to both support and extend students, taking into account all students' needs

Use of intervention strategies can help students to make greater progress:

- Teachers should be aware of students who are making less than expected progress and plan for appropriate intervention
- Where lack of progress is sustained over a long period of time in spite of this intervention, Subject Leaders and progress leaders should be informed
- Teachers should work alongside departmental and academy wide strategies for addressing underachievement
- Teachers need to be aware of those students on the Active Mentoring list and update mentors of their progress as appropriate

Other ideas:

- Use older/other students to help targeted students
- Small group withdrawal for specialist teaching
- Subject mentors for targeted students
- Drop-ins by subject leader for a focussed conversation
- Tailor praise to students taking account of motivation, confidence and target
- Individualised feedback taking account of student progress

WORKING WITH TEACHING ASSISTANTS/ADDITIONAL ADULTS

- **Learning Facilitators**/additional adults are most effectively deployed in the classroom when they are informed of, and involved in, the learning
- Teachers should give **Learning Facilitators** /additional adults the scheme of work in advance
- Regular discussion of student progress and wellbeing should take place with TAs/additional adults
- Teachers should give **Learning Facilitators** /additional adults appropriate guidance on their role within the lesson or sequence of lessons
- **Learning Facilitators** /additional adults should share their in-depth knowledge of the student being supported, particularly if progress differs significantly in other lessons

ASSESSMENT

Formative Assessment - In-school formative assessment helps pupils to measure their knowledge and understanding against learning objectives and wider outcomes and to identify where they need to target their efforts to improve. It should be an integral part of teaching and learning. It allows teachers to understand pupil performance on a continuing basis. It enables teachers to identify when pupils are struggling, when they have consolidated learning and when they are ready to progress. In this way, it supports teachers to provide appropriate support or extension as necessary. It also enables teachers to evaluate their own teaching of particular topics or concepts and to plan future lessons accordingly

The aim of formative assessment is to give students clear guidance about how to improve their work and how they have been successful. Formative assessment allows the learner to reflect and then put in place strategies to improve. Formative assessment works best when students are engaged in an ongoing dialogue about their progress. In subjects with a largely practical component this dialogue will primarily be verbal, with systems in place to ensure that the feedback is understood and acted upon. Where there is less practical work, this dialogue will take place through verbal interaction and regular written feedback.

Summative Assessment - In-school summative assessment provides pupils with information about how well they have learned and understood a topic or course of work taught over a period of time. It should be used to provide feedback on how they can continue to improve. It enables teachers to evaluate both pupil learning at the end of an instructional unit or period (based on pupil-level outcomes) and the impact of their own teaching (based on class-level outcomes). Both these purposes help teachers to plan for subsequent teaching and learning

Students should be actively involved in the assessment process, giving them ownership of their learning and encouraging independent learning.

Key principles of assessment that improve the quality of teaching and learning and hence achievement and progress are:

- Formative feedback should encourage and support the individual needs of students in a constructive way and allow students to take ownership of their learning (see marking, feedback and assessment policy)

- A “Learning Question” must be shared with the students at the start of every lesson
- **Levelled Outcomes** must be set at the start of each lesson
- Success criteria related to levels/grades must be shared with students.
- Ensure that success criteria are shared and modelled throughout lessons.
- Skilful questioning must be used to assess attainment (using, for example, Bloom’s Taxonomy) and set targets for further progression
- Monitor learning throughout lessons in order to continuously assess the pace and strength of progress and to intervene to address misconceptions by reshaping and modifying teaching to meet students’ needs
- Hot spot marking and Verbal feedback stamps can be used as appropriate to support practice
- Plenary phases and opportunities for assessment must be used within lessons to assess progress and summarise learning.
- Praise progress and reward achievement through comments and the academy’s praise and reward systems

Formative comments should:

- be concise and accessible to students and highlight their achievements
- indicate how improvement can be made, giving a target
- be personal
- encourage and support the individual needs of students in a constructive way
- refer to the mark scheme/graded levelled outcomes/success criteria where relevant

Students should be given opportunities to respond to the assessment/marking/feedback and the response must involve them demonstrating their improvement. This could be done through green pen time in class or homework, for example:

- Time set aside during a starter or a plenary activity to make improvements
- Students set their own targets by themselves, with the help of peers/teacher
- Discussion with the student
- Peer teaching
- Re-drafting pieces of work which are checked by the teacher
- Students keep guidelines on how to approach a particular question
- A peer assessment activity

In the case of verbal feedback, students need to keep a record of verbal targets and advice in workbooks and planners. Staff can stamp a student’s book/folder with the ‘Verbal Feedback Given’, who in turn can summarise the conversation had underneath. This ensures staff can document when conversations are taking place within lessons whilst demonstrate quality dialogue

Sharing understanding of levelled **outcomes/success criteria allows students to know what they need to do to be successful and hence make more progress**

Teachers should aim to make **levelled outcomes**/success criteria explicit to students by:

- ‘Translating’ exam board grade/level criteria into accessible language
- Using exemplar material of grades and exam questions
- Using peer and self-assessment routinely (students need to learn the skills of peer-assessment before they can assess their own work reliably)

Effective and meaningful assessment records allow teachers to monitor the progress of individuals over time and intervene where there is underachievement

Teachers will keep sufficient records of current attainment/progress to allow the planning of appropriately challenging lessons for all students. [See academy tracker suggestion.](#)

- Records should support high-quality feedback to students and parents and allow effective “hand-overs” if the teacher of a class or student changes.
- Teachers should ensure that all assessment information is recorded according to academy and departmental or faculty policy.
- A minimum of six “key assessments” each year will feed into the whole-school assessment records. (See marking, assessment and feedback policy)

A key assessment should:

- indicate progress in a key area of the curriculum
- be used to provide high-quality formative feedback
- have clear success criteria linked to graded levelled outcomes shared with students
- be assigned a grade or level (which may or may not be shared with students)
- be used to support judgements in relation to CWG and PRP (See marking, assessment and feedback policy)

High expectations and benchmarking against national “average” expectations ensure that underachievement does not go unrecognised

Students benefit from seeing their progress over time and within the context of different assessments.

Examples of effective practice contain elements of:

- Reference to benchmark grade
- Visual representation of progress
- Shared and open class results in a culture of peer support

Learning takes place both inside and outside the classroom. Students benefit from opportunities to complete work beyond the classroom (see extended Learning Policy)

- Learning outside lessons is vital for building the skills to become an independent learner
- Homework is an integral part of the curriculum and should be used to consolidate, extend and enrich students’ learning.
- Homework should be purposeful and meaningful, and support achievement towards the aims of the current episodes of lessons.
- Where students are engaged in controlled assessments and other extended projects in school, they should be provided with opportunities beyond the classroom to develop the required skills further
- Teachers are expected to set homework as appropriate linked to the materials being studied within the classroom. The proportion of homework students receive will increase as they move through the academy
- Year 9, 10 and Year 11 students should be expected to spend approximately a minimum of 30 minutes per subject per week [increasing in the older years to 1½ hours in Y11](#) working beyond the classroom, this may be through independent study or teacher assigned tasks
- Homework can take a variety of forms including answering questions, reading, extended writing, thinking, planning, independent study, revision and researching.
- Where large ongoing projects are set over several weeks the teacher will ensure that students meet interim deadlines at the appropriate time. Subject and teaching tracking procedures should mean that students do not leave the majority of the work until the final deadline; regular feedback on their work as it is completed will allow faster progress

All homework must be assessed promptly after the hand-in date. Methods of assessment could include:

- Marking and feedback by the teacher
- Testing
- Peer/self-assessment
- Verbal feedback

Students are expected to complete regular pieces of homework to ensure progress continues outside the classroom and should be assessed in the following ways: -

- The homework is given a +, these means the piece of work completed is above the expectations of the staff member or target grade.
- The homework is given a =, these means the piece of work completed is in line with the expectations of the staff member or target grade.
- The homework is given a -, these means the piece of work completed is above the expectations of the staff member or target grade.

To ensure accurate recording, the setting of homework should take place at an appropriate part of the lesson and could be revisited or fully explained further in the lesson if necessary (see extended Learning Policy).

School Leadership Team

The School Leadership team (SLT/MLT) is responsible for the overall quality of teaching and learning across the school.

This is achieved by:

- strategic planning of teaching and learning priorities in conjunction with subject leaders
- supporting individual departments through line management meetings
- ensuring that the plan for academy improvement places a high priority on teaching and learning and that structures are put in place to support these priorities
- monitoring the quality of teaching and learning across the academy through activities such as lesson observations, work scrutiny and SSE

Governors/EAB

The Curriculum, Teaching and Learning committee of the governing body has oversight of issues regarding the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

Key priorities are set out in the Plan for Academy Improvement which is monitored by this committee.

Specific monitoring activities include:

- review of examination results as appropriate
- involvement in departmental reviews/KIT meetings
- reviewing summary reports of academy SSE
- reviewing specific policies related to teaching and learning

Students

Central to our ethos is ensuring that students take responsibility for their own learning and a belief that high expectations of students' results in high levels of achievement.

Students are therefore expected to:

- have high levels of attendance and punctuality
- come to school prepared to learn:

- this means coming equipped with appropriate books and other equipment to school as well as with a positive attitude to their lessons
- always have their planner with them as use it as a learning tool engage in all lessons to the best of their ability
- ensure that their behaviour is appropriate to support learning
- complete all work and homework to the best of their ability
- act on feedback from teachers about how to progress further in their learning

Parents/Carers

We recognise that parents/carers play an important role in supporting their children's learning and that the three way partnership between parents/carers, students and the school is vital for the success of the individual student.

The school undertakes to:

- communicate regularly with parents about their child's progress (see Assessment, Marking and Feedback Policy)
- alert parents promptly to any concerns about their child
- give parents accurate and up to date information regarding their child's programme of study (either in written form, the website or via information evenings)
- respond promptly to parental concerns (see communication policy)

We expect that parents/carers will:

- support the academy in ensuring that their child is working appropriately both at school and at home
- regularly review and sign planners
- engage positively with the academy to resolve any difficulties regarding their child
- attend events such as parent's evenings whenever possible

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

Positive Conduct policy
 Extended Learning Policy
 Assessment, Marking and Feedback Policy
 Literacy Policy
 Numeracy Policy
 Sex and Relationships Education Policy
 Examinations Procedure
 Planning Policy
 Monitoring Policy
 SEND policy

Key Points:

When planning have you:

1. Ensured that you have appropriately differentiated, including using strategies to engage and differentiate for groups identified from class profiles?
2. Planned effectively for any additional adults/**learning facilitator** support?
3. Regularly planned in opportunities to allow students to demonstrate their understanding?
4. Exploited any opportunities to support LAC/NAC or SMSC?

In lessons do you have:

1. A seating plan
2. A Learning Question and clear **levelled outcomes**/success criteria that allow pupils to see what they are aiming to achieve.
3. Opportunities for student response to feedback, marking and assessment.
4. Active learning so pupils have enough time on task to demonstrate and develop learning.

In students work do you have:

1. Dated well-presented work
2. Regular marking that includes question or tasks for pupils to further develop
3. Students response to marking in green pen that leads to improvements
4. A range of teaching assessment opportunities that are appropriate and challenging and pupils have had time to complete

We expect all pupils to achieve well due the excellent teaching that is delivered by staff. We make no excuses for our learners, and expect high standards from them. In strong lessons we see:

