

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

Non Sibi Sed Aliis

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

Psalm 119, vs 105

"For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge
and understanding."

Proverbs 2:6

This policy document and the content contained therein remains the responsibility of the Headteacher and Governing Body of the school. No amendments can be made without their express instructions and they remain the final arbiters in any matters relating to it.

Review Date: Summer Term 2021

Next Review Date: Summer Term 2022

Reviewed By: Mr J Morgan

APPROVED BY THE HEADTEACHER – Summer Term 2021

TEACHING & LEARNING POLICY

The below will be revisited for 2020-21 with the additional umbrella focus of delivering a 'Covid-Safe Recovery Curriculum'. Within the stated aims below it will be essential, where and as appropriate, to deliver a 'blended learning' approach to ensure students have full access to the curriculum and are able to enhance their level of progress, diminishing gaps that may have developed as a consequence of the 'lockdown' period.

Vision statement: 2019-20 (2020-21) School Development Plan focus:-

- 1. To review the sequential development of knowledge in schemes of learning.**
- 2. To develop spaced learning across the curriculum to enable pupils to revisit key ideas over time.**
- 3. To embed retrieval practice by creating opportunities across schemes of learning for pupils to recall information previously taught.**
- 4. To continue to develop lessons in which learning is engaging, challenging and student-centred.**

Purpose of the policy

- Ensure that the students at Balshaw's have high-quality learning experiences that lead to consistently high levels of student achievement.
- Guide what children do, what teachers do, how time is managed, the organisation of the classroom and what Balshaw's as an organisation does to create an effective and well-managed learning environment in which the individual needs of each child can be met.
- Provide a common language and understanding of what makes outstanding teaching within a personalised learning framework and ensure that each individual is given every opportunity to achieve academic excellence using the talents God gave us to the full.

Personalised learning as a concept is understood to mean the development of five key components:

1. Effective teaching and learning
2. Assessment for learning through 'Make A Difference' (MAD) marking
3. Curriculum entitlement and choice for students
4. School organisation; going beyond the classroom
5. Community initiatives

Principles guiding the policy

Teachers' learning

- All teachers are leaders of learning and demonstrate through their own example that they are lifelong learners. We use this learning to support the continual improvement of teaching and learning and thereby contribute to the school improvement strategic plans.
- Professional development is essential for supporting all adults to develop their own learning.
- Teachers take an active interest in and responsibility for developing their teaching practice, and are supported by the school to do this.

Teaching and learning with students

We believe that students learn best when they:

- are happy
- are interested and motivated
- achieve success and gain approval
- are given tasks which match and extend their ability
- clearly understand the task
- are confident, feel secure and are aware of boundaries
- are challenged and stimulated

The learning experience

This should be organised to ensure that students have the opportunity to develop a range of personal learning and thinking skills (PLTS):

- work individually, in groups and as a class
- make decisions
- work co-operatively
- solve problems
- be creative
- discuss their ideas
- develop social skills
- develop independence
- use initiative
- receive support
- achieve academically

Students should be encouraged to develop organisational skills, resilience and independence through:

- appropriate tasks
- confidence-building
- example
- co-operation
- provision of suitable opportunities
- responsibilities

Policies (C)

The learning environment

Learning takes place in an environment which:

- is challenging and stimulating
- is peaceful and calm
- is happy and caring
- is organised
- is well-resourced
- makes learning accessible
- is encouraging and appreciative
- is welcoming
- provides equal opportunities

Responsibilities for teaching and learning

Teaching and Learning with Classroom teachers

Classroom teachers are responsible for the progress of students in their classes and for self-evaluating their own professional development. This is achieved by:

- self-evaluation of their subject knowledge and understanding of educational initiatives as well as teaching and learning pedagogy
- self-evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of their own teaching and their classroom management
- monitoring student progress to ensure they achieve well against prior achievement and similar groups nationally
- self-evaluation of their contribution to the policies and aspirations of the school

Form tutors

Form tutors are responsible for contributing to and monitoring the progression and wellbeing of individual students in their tutor group, and for providing support and advice to those students, both socially and academically. This is achieved by:

- monitoring academic progress and attitudes of individual students through academic tracking, as well as monitoring by HOH and SLT
- encouraging and developing the ability of students to evaluate and take responsibility for their own learning
- monitoring of behaviour, homework and use of diaries, rewards and sanctions, uniform and attendance

Curriculum leaders

Subject leaders are responsible for the effective teaching of their subjects, evaluating the quality of teaching and standards of students' achievements and setting targets for improvement. This is achieved by:

- evaluating the teaching of their subject and the planning of lessons, and using this analysis to identify and share effective practice and to lead action for improvement
- ensuring curriculum coverage, continuity and progress for all students

- establishing and implementing clear policies and practices for assessing, recording and reporting on student progress and setting targets for further improvement in line with whole school policies
- analysing and interpreting data on students' performance against school expectations and other comparative data; setting expectations and targets and implementing actions for the achievement of individual students and key groups (e.g. able students, gender groups, Student Premium students and students at risk of significant underachievement)
- monitoring students' work through work scrutiny; sampling of homework, classwork, students' responses and attitudes in order to make a comparative evaluation of students' work against other classes and year groups to ensure quality and consistency and to implement strategies for improvement

Heads of House

HoH are responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the overall experience of groups and individuals in their respective houses. This is achieved by:

- monitoring the progress and potential specific year groups, and using student data to identify and set targets for specific students according to their needs, e.g. underachievement, able students
- maintaining an overview of the experience of students in specific years by, for example, monitoring the number of detentions and demerits
- monitoring the work of tutors and quality of tutor time, e.g. checking of diaries
- monitoring attitudes to learning through, for example, attendance and homework and reporting back to the SLT and to staff as requested

Senior Leadership Team

The SLT sets priorities and targets for improvement at whole school level based on evidence gained from monitoring procedures. They track progress made on the school improvement plan. Monitoring and evaluation principally takes place through the Departmental Review process and classroom observations of teaching and learning undertaken as part of this process as well as whole school Appraisal

Teaching and Learning: Procedures and processes

Planning and preparation

Teachers should plan lessons:

- which allow students to progress in their learning
- which can use a clear structure to support planning and delivery where relevant to do so:

For example:-

- introduction (connect phase)
- set task/challenge (activation phase)
- do task (demonstration phase)
- plenary (consolidation phase)
- which allow students to develop and practice higher order thinking skills such as creativity, analysis, problem-solving, decision-making and application.
- which are differentiated for varying needs by task, outcomes and/or method

Policies (C)

- which use stimulating resources, including use of ICT and e-learning, which are differentiated as appropriate to the students
- which provide pace and challenge for all students
- which use effective questioning to direct and challenge students
- which are informed by prior learning and ongoing progress
- which are enjoyable and interesting

Teachers are issued with planners and may choose to use more detailed templates for good practice. Any observed lesson should make use of the school lesson planning template provided (located in Staff School Resources/Teaching & Learning folder; hard copy in staff room).

Teaching styles

Teachers should use teaching strategies.

Assessment, recording and reporting (see policy)

Teachers should:

- assess students' work regularly according to the school assessment policy, giving students clear guidance and feedback that informs them how to make progress against set targets as well as the time to respond to this feedback (M.A.D)
- use analysis of assessment to inform their teaching and support students' progress
- use data to ensure students are working at their full potential and set targets to achieve this
- inform parents and appropriate staff within school of students' progress or underachievement

Learning support

Teachers should:

- be aware of the specific learning needs of their students, e.g. literacy, dyslexia, gifted and talented
- consult with SENCO about the needs of individual students when appropriate
- work with teaching assistants and other adults to ensure students are best supported in their learning, and use Educational Health Care Plans as working documents in their planning to differentiate work for individual students

Learning

Students should:

- be prepared for lessons with the correct equipment
- complete homework to enhance their learning
- take pride in their work through consistent expectations across the curriculum for neat and accurate presentation of their work
- make positive contributions to class discussions
- follow the school code of conduct
- take responsibility for improving their own learning
- ask for help if required

Continuous professional development

Teachers should:

- continuously update their subject knowledge and teaching practice in line with current developments and initiatives
- discuss teaching and learning at curriculum area meetings in order to share good practice
- plan their own CPD programme in conjunction with their team leader and/or curriculum leader as a result of the performance management process

Reviews/monitoring of teaching and learning (Departmental Review and Appraisal)

The aim is to:

- identify and share good practice
- evaluate the quality of teaching in line with Ofsted criteria and set targets for improvement
- track progress on teaching and learning issues identified in the school improvement plan
- identify key aspects of teaching for development by departments and for the whole school
- identify and support teachers with aspects of practice which can be improved
- standardise monitoring procedures, including lesson observations through paired observations

Departmental link SLT monitoring and support

Every year, the Headteacher and link SLT member meet each Curriculum Leader with the aim of:

- monitoring the effectiveness of leadership and management of their curriculum area
- analysing performance data and setting targets for improvement
- giving support and arranging training for development
- ensuring quality of standards and verifying judgements of middle leaders
- ensuring the quality of teaching and learning

The SLT link will continue to monitor and support the Curriculum Leader throughout the year

Questions to ask about your lessons

Planning

- What were the learning objectives for the lesson and for (named individual/group)?
- How were the learning objectives differentiated to meet the needs of (named individual/group)?
- How do the learning objectives for the lesson develop from previous work?
- Are there clear success criteria/outcomes for the learning?

Differentiation

- What did the high/medium/low ability students achieve in this lesson?
- What else might you do to ensure that (named individual/group) achieves well?
- What support is offered to students with SEN/EAL/G&T/PP?

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- How did (named individual/group) access the tasks and content in the lesson?
- How does the lesson link to previous learning/the next lesson for (named individual/group)?
- What might you do to ensure that (named individual/group) needs are met?
- What were the objectives for the teaching assistant in this lesson?
- How did the teaching assistant; other adult support (named individual/group) needs?

Student behaviour/attitude?

- How did (named individual/group) apply themselves to the task/learning required?
- What was the impact of the behaviour of (named individual/group) on their own learning/learning of others?
- How would you summarise the attitude of (named individual/group) in the lesson?
- What might you do to improve the attitude/behaviour of (named individual/group)?
- How was the teaching assistant used to support work application and behaviour expectations?
- How successful was the teaching assistant in doing this?
- What could you do to help him/her become more successful in managing the behaviour of (named individual/group)?

Learning objectives/achievement/progress

- What were the learning objectives for the lesson and for (named individual/group)?
- Did (named individual/group) achieve the learning objectives set?
- What is the evidence for this?
- Was the level of challenge appropriate for (named individual/group)? What is the evidence you used to reach this judgement?
- How much progress did (named individual/group) make in this lesson? What is the evidence you used to reach this judgement?
- How easy/difficult did (named individual/group) find the objectives of the lesson?
- What else could (named individual/group) have achieved in this lesson? How might you help them achieve this?

SEN/G&T/PP

- What individual needs does (named individual/group) have that are relevant to this lesson?

- How were the tasks/lesson content/your expectations adapted for (named individual/group) needs?
- What further provision could be made for (named individual/group)?
- How do the objectives of the lesson for (named individual/group) link to their EHCP?
- What else could (named individual/group) have achieved in this lesson? How might you help them achieve this?

ICT

- What were the objectives for the use of ICT in this lesson?
- What impact on learning did the use of ICT make in the lesson?
- How did the use of ICT extend students' learning in the lesson?
- How might ICT have made greater impact on learning in the lesson?
- In what ways did the use of ICT extend the learning in the lesson?

Learning styles

- How did your teaching cater for the different learning styles of students in the class?
- Which student or groups need specific emphasis or approaches to support the effectiveness of their learning?
- How were these students/groups supported in this lesson?
- How might you develop your teaching/the resources used to support (named individual/group) further?

Assessment

- What opportunities for assessment were built into the lesson?
- Did you build adequate time into the lesson for students to respond to assessment feedback? (M.A.D. time)
- What does the assessment information tell you about the students' learning and future needs?
- How does the evaluation of the lesson contribute to your overall assessment of the students' achievement?

Resources and the learning environment

- How effective were students in accessing the necessary resources and equipment in the lesson?
- How might this have been further improved?

Policies (C)

- What support for the lesson's learning objectives could students gain from the classroom displays and resources?
- What further resources might have extended this support for students?

Student independence and ownership of learning

- What was the balance between teacher-directed learning and independent student learning in the lesson?
- How effective was this balance in relation to the learning objectives of the lesson?
- How might any shift in this balance be achieved?
- How much independence did (named individual/group) take in their learning in the lesson?
- How might this be extended?

Balshaw's quality assurance framework

In summary, to underpin everything that we do at Balshaw's is the guiding principle that every learner must fulfil their academic potential, with all learners, both student and adult, aiming at excellence in everything they do.

Quality assurance will be ensured through:

- Monitoring of teaching and learning – through Departmental Review and the Appraisal process and information monitoring by line managers.
- Target setting and data tracking (with intervention in place).
- Regular ongoing and rigorous departmental self-review.
- Access to Continuing Professional Development that enhances, develops and shares best practice with colleagues internally and externally.