Teaching and Learning Policy: Achievement and Practice

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Bolton School Girls' Division believes in quality first teaching and learning predicated on the belief that our teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge, thorough planning and an insightful understanding of and dedication to the needs of all pupils. Lesson design should be highly focussed on the needs of all pupils, differentiating learning and setting purposeful objectives. Assessment is both formative and summative so that our students can effectively monitor their progress and, with their teachers, identify the next steps of their learning. We believe in making high demands of our students' involvement in and engagement with their learning. The best teaching consistently seeks to develop students' participation, independence and resilience. Personalisation of learning is essential to allow all learners to make good progress, achieve and actively participate in their learning. High quality resources that are wide ranging and new technologies should be used to enhance, redefine and inform learning.

1. **Principles**
- The efficacy of teaching is to be judged by the progress made by students; teachers' understanding of pupils' aptitudes and needs; teacher knowledge and understanding and the methods employed.
- Academic staff receive training, guidance and support, enabling them to contribute to the provision of outstanding teaching and learning.
- Students are encouraged to behave in a manner that facilitates their learning, development and progression.

   Learning needs to:
- Be enjoyable, exciting and worthwhile
- Allow students to enjoy the journey of discovering new ideas, concepts and knowledge
- Develop higher order thinking such as analytical and evaluative skills
- Enable learners to develop socially and emotionally as well as well-rounded individuals
- Prepare learners for the world of work, further and/ or higher education and support them to make well-reasoned choices about their lives
- Provide learners with the skills and values to enable them to succeed and excel

Teaching should:
- Provide rich and varied contexts for learning
- Take into account national strategies and best practice
- Personalise learning
- Experiment and innovate
- Promote self-esteem, understanding of others and emotional well-being
- Encourage students to think for themselves and take charge of their learning
- Continually reinforce expectations of behaviour and attitudes to learning
- Encourage students to appreciate human aspirations and achievements.

Learners need to:
- Be motivated, interested and feel that they are making progress
- Become innovative and creative in 'thinking and learning'
- Persevere, even when finding the work challenging or difficult, being rewarded for effort
- Have a positive attitude to and enjoy learning, taking responsibility for it
- Work independently and collaboratively
- Understand how they learn and how to move on to the next step of learning

2. Expectations and Standards of Teaching Learning
Lessons normally follow departmental schemes of learning.

Lessons should:
- be active, well-paced, varied and stimulating.
- be challenging and push students' understanding forward
- be focused and purposeful
- have time built in for reflection, growth and assessment

Teachers are encouraged to try new methodologies and to calculated risks and to promote student-led and independent learning.

Contextualise/ Rationalise the Learning
- Students should understand the context of their learning.
- Learning objectives should be clear and discussed with students as appropriate to the lesson structure and aims.
- Students should fully engage with success criteria for the lesson and review their progress against this.
- Involve students in revisiting prior learning to reinforce the sense of direction and learning and students should be involved in working out their next steps.
- Encourage students to think about how they learn in the subject and how their
  learning can be linked with other.

Teaching Activities
- An engaging starter activity should make students think from the start of the lesson.
- Use a range of activities and learning methodologies to maximize students' different
  learning styles and to utilise their multiple intelligences.
- Activities should be timely and well-paced
- Questioning should ensure high challenge for each student and allow her to demonstrate process
- Students should be involved in individual, paired and group work during a course of

study and should be encouraged to reflect on how they learn in these situation.
- Learning should allow students to engage in solving problems and processes of trial and improvement.
- Take every opportunity to check understanding, to give feedback and appropriate
   praise for effort - students should be involved in a dialogue about their progress.
- New technologies should be used where relevant to aid and improve learning through redefinition
- Provide adequate time to review learning, check understanding and set targets for
   progress.
- There should be a clear and cohesive end to the lesson, with a recap of the lesson,
   reviewing progress against the lesson's objectives and outlining the next lesson.
- Peer and self-assessment should be used to facilitate pupils' active learning.

Growth Mindsets

To develop independent learners, it is important to nurture Growth Mindsets where students believe that their intelligence can grow and that effort leads to success. This means providing opportunities for students to:
- Embrace challenge
- Persist in the face of setbacks
- Learn from criticism
- See the relationship between effort and achievement

Teachers should, therefore, reinforce and praise effort and personal progress in verbal and written feedback.

Differentiation

We judge the quality of our teaching on individual students making progress. As providing the same for every student cannot achieve this, effective provision must build from the point where each student is currently and to help move them forwards. Thus, to engage, motivate and get the most progress from each student, personalisation and differentiation must be at the core of our teaching. Differentiation can be created through:
- Different tasks
- Different resources
- Different methods/levels of assessment
- Variety of pace
- Extension work
- Research tasks
- Levels and frequency of student interaction
- Different groupings

- Different levels of support
- Self direction/negotiation.

Organisation
- Student notes and files should be encouraged to be tidy, organised and appropriately structured.
- Class lists should include details of vulnerable groups such as SEN, EAL, Scholars,
    MATs and students' progress should be tracked
- Students' books/ folders should contain relevant mark schemes and overviews of the
    course
- Where appropriate, links should be made to literacy, numeracy and technology skills
    across the curriculum
- There should be support provided for students who missed lessons.

Learning Environments should also encourage students to think and should provide students with an additional learning resource. Classrooms should be positive learning environments, with key terms and success criteria displayed for students to promote achievement. Some of the best displays are interactive, requiring students to engage with them and regularly referred to during lessons.

3.   Homework

The homework timetable is organised by the Heads of School for their Year groups. Teachers are expected to adhere to this timetable to allow students the best opportunity for completing homework effectively.

Homework should:
- Be purposeful: extending, embedding or revising learning or providing opportunity
    for new learning
- Be suitable for the time allowance and the level of ability so that completion is both
    achievable and challenging
- Be clearly communicated to the student and a record made
- Be marked in accordance with school and department assessment policies

4.   Monitoring the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning

- **Review and development**.

Both the Major and Minor Review schedules will allow for SLT; Middle Managers and individual members of staff to reflect on teaching practice and the learning taking place. It draws on a variety of evidence from the areas outlined below:

- **Observations**

Every member of teaching staff will be observed formally each year as part of their review schedule. The objective of this observation will be to assess and develop classroom practice. Depending on the teacher's targets and aims, the observer may have a single area of focus.

Informal observations and Learning Walks

Members of SLT and Middle Managers may conduct informal observations as a means of monitoring and developing teaching practice across the school or within a department. Staff will be informed if such observations are taking place.

Peer Observations

Staff are encouraged to observe others lessons and to engage in feedback on observations as a means of developing their practice and the quality of teaching and learning in their department and across the school.

Induction

Teaching staff being inducted into the school will be observed, using the formal observation form, at least twice during their first year. They will also complete an interim and full review of their progress and performance. This will be overseen by their line manager and/or the Assistant Head (Curricular and Extra-Curricular Achievement)

- **Work scrutiny**

Work Scrutiny will be used throughout the year, using the forms and guidance prepared by the Headmistress. These may take the form of peer scrutiny; departmental scrutiny; SLT scrutiny. They may focus on a particular area of teaching, learning and assessment, or be used to give an overview of standards of practice throughout the school or a particular department.

- **Data tracking and Monitoring**

The school uses MidYis, Yellis and Alis data as a baseline for performance data. All subjects across the school, from Sept 2015, will record performance data at set points throughout the school year and this will be used to track and monitor achievement and progress of individuals and groups.

Data from external examinations will be analysed at department level and by the Senior Leadership Team to evaluate and develop the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

- **Student Voice**

Student Voice will be used to gauge the effectiveness of current teaching and learning practice and to develop future performance. This may take the form of questionnaires, surveys, group interviews or one to one discussion. Information and records of such "voice" should be analysed in order to inform further developments. Student voice may be conducted at classroom, department, year group, key stage or whole school level.

5.   Merits, Awards and Commendation

(From September 2016 we are recording our rewards and sanctions on ISAMS)

Subject Merit: can be gained through either one single award of a Merit or through the accumulation of three *Credits.* Each subject department has its own criteria for deciding when **good work** warrants the award of a Merit or Credit. This may also be given, for example, for sustained effort in organising work, a significant improvement in attainment or organisation or a significant contribution to lessons, etc.
Citizenship Merits can be awarded for good behaviour or acts of citizenship either inside or outside the classroom.

In Years 7 to 9, pupils who gain 10 Merits across a range of subjects receive a book token, presented by the Headmistress. **In Years 10 and 11**, pupils who gain 5 Merits receive a book token, presented by the Headmistress.

In addition a teacher can award a **Commendation** and so put forward an outstanding piece of work for consideration for the **Headmistress' Commendation.** The Head of School will be notified and will ask to see the piece of work before putting it forward for the HC.

The Headmistress will have appointed lunchtimes where girls can go to present the work and sign the Commendation Record.

Concerns should still be raised with Head of Dept as a regular part of Departmental meetings. These are communicated to the Head of School and the rest of SLT via the minutes.

6.   Students with SEND or in need of Learning Support

The following is taken from the School's SEND Policy. This policy and the Learning Support Policy should be consulted for further information.
The School endeavours to identify at the earliest opportunity any pupil who may have SEND and to provide a graduated response to match the pupil's level of need. Where a teacher, parent or outside agency (including feeder school) expresses concern about a pupil which may indicate SEND, the Head of School and the Learning Support Coordinator will liaise with the pupil, her parent(s) and teachers in order to agree methods for dealing with the pupil's needs. These strategies may well be outlined and monitored by pastoral staff as part of the process of Tracking, Intervention and Monitoring.
The process by which we identify and assess need is dealt with in detail in the Learning Support Policy.

Provision

The School provides individual education plans (IEPs) for girls with significant learning difficulties or disabilities, and ensures that the admissions, discipline and other procedures (such as arrangements for school trips or examinations) take account of pupils' needs. The Learning Support Coordinator maintains a register of those girls who have been identified as requiring monitoring or support. The School nurses may be involved with the drawing up of Individual Health Care Plans where appropriate.

Teaching staff and, where appropriate, support staff are made aware of each pupil's needs so that they may be met in all school settings. All teachers have a responsibility to ensure that each girl, including those with SEND, is given every opportunity to fulfil her potential within the classroom and therefore to adhere to any recommendations set out in the IEP. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to ensure that schemes of work and associated resources are appropriate for the needs of those with SEND.

7.   More Able and Talented Students
The following is taken from the School's MATS Policy which should be consulted for further information.
It is the responsibility of the teacher to provide an appropriately challenging education for able students and the responsibility of Heads of Department to ensure Schemes of Learning allow for differentiation/personalisation which ensures work is matched to the differing capabilities of individuals or groups.

The support for able students will be primarily, though not exclusively, be by means of classroom teaching and differentiation to extend their learning.

To create the conditions to support able students, it is important that they are:
• Allowed to get it wrong
• Encouraged to take risks
• Encouraged to ask for help
• Commended for effort as well as achievement

Provision
The most important provision will occur in lessons. In class provision is likely to include:
•   Setting students work from a higher year group/ more challenging tasks
•   Setting of students into ability bands
•   Giving students opportunities to lead a topic with the class/ teach a lesson
•   Giving students the chairperson role when doing group work
•   Giving students the opportunity of independent research – e.g. projects
•   Allowing students to further their knowledge – e.g. by doing comparative work rather than descriptive; providing activities that require higher order thinking skills
•   Providing a more challenging resource
•   Providing students with extra reading

- Sharing differentiated success criteria in advance
- Foster originality, independence and initiative

NB: This is not an exclusive list.

8. Students with English as an Additional Language

The following is taken from the School's EAL Policy which should be consulted for further information.

- EAL pupils should be supported in order to enable access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.
- English is best learnt through the curriculum and EAL pupils should be encouraged to play a full part in class activities;
- The school environment, both in and outside the classroom, should promote language development;
- Bilingualism and multiculturalism are assets that should be actively supported and celebrated.

Provision

Language support is best provided within the classroom wherever possible. The curriculum offers an ideal platform for language learning, as it offers pupils the chance to practise all four language skills, (speaking, listening, reading and writing), with peers and adults, using the curriculum to provide a meaningful context and cognitive challenge.

A supportive classroom environment enriches the language content of the lesson, whatever the subject discipline.

Language Enriched Teaching

- Analyse the language demands of lesson content, in order to understand how each lesson can promote language as well as content learning;
- Preview language objectives alongside other aims at the beginning of the lesson;
- Provide ample opportunities for talk – pair work, collaborative activities etc. (whilst being aware that pupils with EAL may need time before being able or confident to engage in speaking) and model spoken structures, for example using frameworks for talking and active listening tasks;
- Encourage pupil responses and promote interaction using different forms of questioning: closed and open, concrete and abstract, etc.;
- Allow pupils 'time to think' before answering questions;
- Scaffold reading activities, for example using paired reading and directed activities related to texts (DARTs);
- Scaffold writing tasks, for example matching, sequencing, providing writing frames and word banks;

- Teach language skills explicitly, including demonstrating grammar conventions (e.g. the use of connectives in essay writing), with opportunities to practise language use;
- Focus on developing - and providing the language for - higher order thinking skills such as hypothesising, evaluating, inferring, generalising etc.;
- Prepare resources that support the development of pupils' language skills and understanding, including visuals or graphic organisers (for example timelines, tree diagrams, flow charts, tables, graphs, pie charts and cycle diagrams) to support understanding of key words and concepts;
- Develop increased opportunities for all pupils to be taught subjects through arts activities such as art and design, music, drama and dance;
- Reinforce language learning and understanding through repetition, highlighting vocabulary learnt, summarising and recording what has been learnt and creating opportunities to revisit key concepts through questioning;
- Allow pupils time to summarise and reflect on what they have learned at the end of a lesson;
- Integrate speaking, listening, reading and writing, and use one language skill to support and reinforce another;