

Altrincham College

Teaching and Learning Policy

Background

“Our vision is to nurture well-rounded citizens of the future who are knowledgeable, happy and resilient so that they make a valuable contribution to the world in which they live, and are empowered to make informed and positive life choices.” (Altrincham College Vision Statement)

We believe that teachers make the complex, understandable; the mind-boggling, magical; they make sense of matter and what matters. Teachers make students look again and change their perspective; they make eyes widen and mouths drop; they make the unmotivated, ambitious and the interested, passionate. Teachers make the curious expand their horizons and they make futures into reality.

Introduction

This policy aims to clarify:

- best practice in our school which ensures students know and remember more, can understand and do more
- the expectations our school has for staff and students when taking responsibility for teaching and learning

Principles

Our school motto *‘To Know, To Care, To Live’* is the foundation upon which our educational values are built. We seek to establish a culture which promotes high aspiration, enables academic success and supports personal growth, preparing and equipping students for success in all aspects of their adult life.

Our ambition is for all of our students, regardless of background, to make outstanding progress and achieve in ways which will open the door to the future of their choice. We want our students to be resilient, to value effort, to understand that failure is an essential part of the learning process and to recognise that developing a positive, ‘can do’ attitude will help them set and achieve aspirational goals.

Practice, Roles and Responsibilities

Teaching

“Every teacher needs to improve, not because they are not good enough, but because they can be even better.”

Dylan William

Teachers at Altrincham College adhere to the DfE Teacher Standards (2013) and the South Manchester Learning Trust Staff Code of Conduct at all times. They are expected to:

- challenge and inspire students, expecting the most of them, so as to deepen their knowledge, understanding and skills
- plan lessons which are fully and creatively differentiated to cater for all students including ‘groups’ of students
- demonstrate deep knowledge and passion for their subject area during the lesson and within lesson planning and preparation
- be reflective by evaluating the effect they are having on students’ learning, adjusting their teaching style, lesson content and intervention strategies accordingly
- fully utilise information provided by the SENDCo to support individual learning needs are met
- fully utilise in-class support from Learning Support Assistants, working with them before and after each lesson to ensure in-class support is specifically targeted to meet individual student needs
- ensure questioning is skilful and rich, from lower order to higher in every lesson
- be skilled in formative assessment practices, assessing the learning that is taking place throughout the lesson and changing the course of the lesson if appropriate

- use assessment data to plan effective lessons which close gaps in student progress (knowing and remembering more)
- recognise and act upon any differences in the standards of achievement or progress made by different 'groups' of students
- provide students with appropriate and timely written and verbal feedback that will develop a growth mindset, encouraging metacognition and self-regulation
- set appropriate homelearning tasks which reinforce and/or extend what is learned in school
- insist on high levels of positive behaviour for learning at all times, managing poor behaviour skilfully and without allowing it to impact detrimentally on the learning of others
- take responsibility for their own professional learning.

Learning

Students are motivated to:

- take an active interest in their studies through encouragement and support from their parents/carers
- improve their performance and be willing to learn from areas for development as well as strengths
- enjoy lessons and respond to the tasks set
- demonstrate, through various forms of assessment and tests, that they are performing as well as they possibly can
- take pride in their work and look after resources and their learning environment.

Students take responsibility for their own Behaviour for Learning by following the 3 Rs in the Behaviour Policy and by:

- improving their own learning and acting on feedback quickly
- evaluating their achievement of learning outcomes
- concentrating on tasks set and listening attentively
- making positive contributions to class discussions
- helping each other and working collaboratively as well as independently.

Students develop the following skills to:

- persevere with tasks they find difficult
- respond positively to opportunities given to extend their learning
- meet deadlines
- retain knowledge, apply it in unfamiliar contexts and make connections across other areas of the curriculum.

Students understand the implications of social learning by following the 3 Rs as highlighted in our Behaviour Policy.

Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning

We have an agreed format for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning using our internal Quality Assurance (QA) framework. A lesson plan proforma (Appendix 3) may be used by teachers however this is not required for an observation within the QA cycle. The QA framework comprises:

- regular, minuted line management meetings between SLT and Middle Leaders to ensure the highest quality provision inside and outside of the classroom
- actions for improvement followed up via line management meetings and/or SLT meetings with staff held to account for their areas of responsibility
- curriculum review and planning meetings with SLT and HoDs to ensure a bespoke, aspirational offer (see Curriculum Policy 2020)
- analysis of data and target setting for improvement
- support for continued professional development in-house and externally

- three lesson observations by SLT of no more than 30 minutes (one per term; see Appendix 1)
- a maximum of three Learning Walks (one per term) conducted by the link SLT with the HoD of no more than 20 minutes each (Appendix 2)
- regular work scrutinies conducted by SLT and/or HoD (Appendix 4)
- regular student voice via specific surveys and Student Council.

This allows us to monitor and evaluate the quality of provision over time against our Academy Improvement Plan (AIP) first and foremost; it also supports staff appraisal and ensures teachers meet the Teacher Standards. Departmental Improvement Plans (DIPs) and other action plans are produced by HoDs and HoLs, in line with the AIP, against which progress is closely monitored by the relevant line managers on SLT. On-going monitoring takes place to focus on particular issues or to support where the need for development has been identified. The monitoring aims to:

- identify and share good practice
- evaluate the quality of teaching in line with teacher standards and set targets for improvement
- identify key aspects of teaching and learning for development by departments and for the whole school
- identify and support teachers to excel in the art, craft and science of teaching

In some cases, where there are concerns over the quality of teaching and learning linked to a particular member of staff or department, it may be necessary to put in some intensive support. This will be monitored and evaluated in conjunction with the member of staff/HoD and the Deputy Headteacher.

Continuous Professional Development

At Altrincham College we hold professional learning in the highest regard therefore our CPD Programme allows substantial, meaningful and directed time for this within the school calendar. We believe that the best educators are the best learners and we therefore expect staff to be avidly engaged with their own professional learning within a dynamic learning community. Staff should actively connect with research in order to best inform their own classroom practice. At Altrincham College we recognise and embrace the complexity involved in professional learning and development. Professional development opportunities include:

- Coaching Triads and Coaching for Leadership
- Observing colleagues to share good practice both within our school and in other schools
- NPQSL, NPQML and NPQH
- NQT and ITT programmes in- house and via Loreto Teaching School Alliance
- Action Research Teams
- T&L workshops to share good practice
- WiSH (Women into Secondary Headship)
- Exam board specialist training
- Subject networks for sharing practice, standardisation, mastery
- Support for non-specialist teachers

Literacy and numeracy

Literacy and numeracy should be corrected in a way which is appropriate to the needs of the student. Our Marking and Feedback Policy highlights how we would correct for literacy. Where a student's work is littered with errors it might be best to focus only on a limited amount of mistakes so as to maintain a focused and positive marking process. Students should be expected to complete corrections and may be given time in lessons to do so. The codes are designed to standardise our approach to highlighting literacy issues. The process is designed that it might be used in a variety of curriculum areas.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development is the term used to embrace the broader dimension of the school curriculum. It ranges from teaching in religious studies and citizenship through to relationships and sex education plus a wide range of extra-curricular and out-of-school activities. Importantly these vital dimensions of life and growth should be present across the entire curriculum.

Spiritual development

To help students in their positive spiritual development, all lessons and additional learning activities should be designed, wherever possible to:

- promote students' self-esteem by valuing and rewarding their achievements
- encourage students to reflect on their learning and allow them to question and explore
- provide opportunities in and out of lessons for them to discuss and exchange views
- be supportive of those who seek faith or wish to strengthen it.

Moral development

In order for teaching and learning to be effective, students at our school must adopt a shared moral code of respect. This moral code is taught through form time activities, assemblies and through the Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship Education (PSHCE) programme. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning (we are learning about metacognition and self-regulation) and for that of others through peer support.

Social development

As part of engaging lessons and activities, students are expected to interact with their peers and other members of the community. Consequently, their social development is of great importance. When planning teaching and learning activities, staff should always try to promote an environment where there is:

- a willingness to co-operate with other students by balancing individual and collective needs
- a readiness to celebrate others' achievements
- a feeling of mutual respect and tolerance
- a culture where students aspire to achieve because they know their education will open doors to their future.

Cultural development

As well as developing an awareness of their own cultural roots, students should also be able to appreciate the diversity and evolution of cultural traditions. It is particularly important that the following should occur as part of their learning journey:

- in lessons, assemblies and form period students should be helped to understand, respect and appreciate other beliefs, social circumstances and cultures and their impact
- further opportunities for the above should take place in extra-curricular activities and school trips.

The classroom is at the heart of everything we do. By striving to achieve our vision, we will instil a thirst for knowledge in happy and resilient people who are equipped to make a positive difference to their community and their world beyond.

Policy date: April 2020 Approved by Governors: 13th May 2020

Review date by Deputy Head i/c T&L: February 2021

Lesson Observation Prompts & Record	Date	Period	Observer(s)	Teacher
	Subject		Focus	
	Group	Number of students		Length of observation
Lesson Objectives				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Clear and measurable ✓ Built on previous learning ✓ Shared with students at start ✓ Appropriate yet challenging ✓ Differentiated ✓ Revisited and measured at intervals / end 				
Planning & preparation				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ties in with long/medium term plans ✓ Prior learning reflected, consolidated and built upon ✓ Materials and resources are engaging, high quality and prepared in advance ✓ Effective deployment of support staff, considered in advance ✓ Staff have ensured subject knowledge of topic is secure in advance ✓ Quality homework is planned which furthers understanding, aids progress and deepens knowledge 				
Knowledge & use of pupil data/information				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Awareness of individual targets / flightpaths ✓ Staff knowledge of specific groups of students (SEND, PP, EAL) ✓ Planning shows consideration to individual and whole class data, it is learner focussed ✓ Evidence that the teacher knows the students as individuals, very well ✓ Seating plans in place according to the priorities / needs of the group 				
Pace, timing & variety				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A prompt start to the lesson ✓ A through the door activity ✓ A variety of tasks that promote discussion & consolidate learning ✓ Modelling and scaffolding are used appropriately ✓ Tasks are interesting, challenging and appropriate ✓ Tasks provide opportunities for students to develop and verbalise their thinking ✓ A pace that engages learners whilst allowing for maximum consolidation of learning ✓ Timings are appropriate 				
Classroom management/Learning Environment				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Secure and respectful learning environment that promotes good behaviour ✓ Awareness of potential barriers to learning and attempt to remove / minimise them ✓ Maintains good relationships with students 				

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Manages behaviour effectively, appropriately & consistently, in line with whole school C system ✓ Clear rules, routines and high expectations ✓ Praise and reward is used effectively and consistently ✓ Ensures all students are involved and all contributions are valued ✓ Uses classroom space effectively; displays are fresh and engaging ✓ Ensures smooth transition between activities 	
Pupil work & books	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Evidence of student pride in their work ✓ Student presentation of work being stressed, marking and feedback policy adhered to ✓ Marked and up to date ✓ Feedback is accurate, targeted and constructive. ✓ Evidence of pupil response to feedback ✓ Clear evidence of pupil progress in books ✓ Learning links with long/medium term plans and builds on prior learning 	
Assessment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Assessment criteria shared with students ✓ Range of questioning techniques ✓ Evidence of peer and self-assessment opportunities (either witnessed in lesson or evident in books) ✓ Formative assessment evident & not in the form of a quick student survey ✓ Assessment is used to inform future planning ✓ Verbal feedback provides clear ways to students on how to progress 	
Impact on progress/learning incl student voice	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Students show a positive and enthusiastic attitude to learning ✓ Students can confidently explain what they have learned ✓ Students are concentrating and reflecting on their work ✓ Students can apply their learning in different contexts ✓ Students are clear on how, and have a desire to, improve and progress further ✓ Evidence linked to personal development eg. SMSC 	
Strengths	Areas for Development
Staff comment and signature: Date:	Observer comment and signature: Date:



Learning Walk

Date:	Staff:	Subject:
Focus:	Form or teaching group:	Visitor:

What are we hoping to see (linked to DIP or Ofsted Action Plan)?

Strengths (What Went Well?)

Area(s) for development (Even Better If)

A teaching/learning idea I might pinch from you today:

Signed (Visitor):

Position:

Thank you for allowing me to drop in!

Signed (MoS):

Comment/reflection:



LESSON PLAN PROFORMA 2019

Teacher	Subject	Class	Date/Period
Topic / Context			
Previous Related Learning			
Differentiated Learning Objectives / Outcome (know, understand, be able to do)			
Literacy		Numeracy	
Pupil info – initials of pupils who are PP, SEND, EAL or identified for another specific reason			
PP	SEND/EAL	Other reason for identifying	

Teaching / Learning Activity	Time	Assessment for Learning / Showing Progress
STARTER		
MAIN		
PLENARY		

Work Scrutiny Proforma 2019

SUBJECT:	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E
Is FAR marking being used as the common vocabulary?					
Do 'action' comments/ questions/ commands encourage student engagement with marking?					
Is there evidence that students are responding appropriately to the teacher marking and is this helping to show progress?					
Is all staff marking in green?					
Are students responding in red?					
Is there evidence of useful peer and/ or self-assessment?					
Are literacy codes being used appropriately?					
Is there evidence of different expectations for PP/ NPP students?					
Is there evidence of appropriate challenge linked to prior attainment?					
Good Practice Comments:					
Further Action required:					

Signed:

Date:

MoS: