

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy

Sept 2021

Version 3

1. Scope

This policy applies to all staff at The School (Hereafter referred to as the School).

Aspiration and Challenge.

2. Introduction

This policy acts as a point of reference for the school staff to guide them in providing an effective, well-managed learning environment, in which individual students can thrive, flourish and learn.

At the School we will ensure that at every level, in all our work and throughout all aspects of the School all students will be treated equally, with respect and dignity, free from discrimination and harassment.

Each person will be given fair and equal opportunities to develop their full potential regardless of their age, disability, gender, gender-identity, race, religion or belief, appearance, health conditions, home or personal situation, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity (refers to staff / employment), socio-economic background and special educational needs.

Our School will tackle the barriers, which could lead to unequal outcomes for these protected groups, ensuring there is equality of access and that we celebrate and value the diversity within School.

The School will work actively to promote equality and foster positive attitudes and commitment to an education for equality.

3. Teaching & Learning

The School believe that all students should realise their optimum potential by receiving a wide range of high quality, challenging learning experiences and opportunities.

The school aims to:

- Provide students with a range of varied learning activities and tasks which are responsive to their different learning styles.
- Address students' individual learning needs through the use of effective teaching approaches.
- Make effective use of a range of well-presented curriculum materials and resources to match students' learning interests and aspirations.
- Engage students fully as active participants in the learning processes.
- Recognise and address any underachievement through appropriate teaching and learning programmes.
- Acknowledge and promote parental involvement and partnership in students' learning.

4. Teaching & Learning Objectives

The School's objectives are to:

- Ensure the school's teaching, learning & assessment policy is implemented consistently by all staff
- Identify and remove barriers to learning.
- Ensure the classroom ethos and environment promotes learning.
- Ensure students are clear about the expected learning outcomes.
- Ensure lessons are well structured, have a brisk pace and provide opportunities to extend and review learning.
- Ensure teachers' planning takes account of continuity and progression in learning and takes account of students' prior attainment.
- Ensure teachers know how students learn best; ensure students receive feedback on how they can improve their learning.
- Ensure assessment takes place to inform planning and therefore enhance student progress.

5. Definitions

Learning can be defined as: ***"...a process of active engagement with experience. It is what people do when they want to make sense of the world. It may involve an increase in skills, knowledge, understanding, values and the capacity to reflect. Effective learning leads to change, development and a desire to learn"***.

6. Learning entails:

- Acquiring more or new knowledge, memorising and reproducing knowledge.
- Applying facts or procedures and understanding in different situations.
- Seeing something in a different way.
- Change in a person.

Students learn best when:

- Account is taken of all learning styles; opportunities are given for multi-sensory learning.
- They are actively involved in the learning process.
- Given opportunities to ask questions, express opinions and answer open-ended questions.
- Taught how to learn.
- Given opportunities to regularly review their learning.
- They are happy, interested, motivated, confident and secure in the learning environment.
- Are able to achieve success and gain approval.
- They are clear about what they are expected to do.
- Challenged, inspired and stimulated.
- Given the opportunity to work individually, in pairs, groups and as a whole class.
- Provided with opportunities to discuss their learning.

Teachers create effective learning environments when teaching approaches provide equality of opportunity, and maintain student motivation and concentration. The learning culture is child-centred, values students' own interests and learning and initiative, and is open to others' ideas. The appropriate learning culture encourages students to understand the factors that help them to progress in their learning. Incorrect student answers to questions in lessons are utilised as productive opportunities to learning, which encourage creative thinking.

7. All teachers observe the inclusion principles of:

- Setting suitable learning challenges.
- Responding to students' diverse learning needs.
- Overcoming barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of individuals.
- Having a clear understanding about different learning styles which enables them to set appropriate learning challenges for the diversity of students in lessons.

8. Effective teaching in the school is characterised by:

- Clear planning to meet student diversity.
- Well-focused lessons, (which have a relevant starter, core purpose and a plenary) that assesses whether the learning objectives have been met.
- Lessons being delivered using a variety of teaching approaches.
- A classroom climate based on mutual respect and focused on learning.
- Assessment, recording and reporting of students' progress that informs future learning and planning.
- Clear learning objectives set which are shared with and understood by students.
- The teacher modelling and demonstrating expected learning outcomes.
- High expectations; good discipline and behaviour management.
- The effective use of resources, which may include IT & Teaching Assistants.
- Classroom displays being utilised to extend, support and enhance students' learning.
- Teachers having secure subject knowledge.
- Homework being used to extend, review and consolidate learning whenever appropriate.

9. Roles and responsibilities

The headteacher and assistant headteacher, alongside the teaching team, will monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school through effective use of the quality cycle that the school employs. The aforementioned staff are responsible for monitoring the teaching and learning policy; reporting annually to the governing body on the effectiveness of this policy; supporting the continuing professional development of assessment procedures and of staff in relation to improving teaching and learning; and addressing any issues arising from student underachievement.

Subject teachers are responsible for overseeing that their subject policy, schemes of work and programmes of study keep teaching and learning as a key focus. They are responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the delivery of their subject areas.

All teachers and TAs who are delivering are responsible for the quality of teaching and learning within their classroom. Teaching assistants provide targeted additional learning support, which is delivered within the classroom to extend learning and enhance curriculum access. Alternatively, they may deliver a specific learning programme as part of a 'catch-up' learning scheme, to narrow the learning gap for specific students.

The school Behaviour, Attendance and Pastoral team provide an important bridge between home and school, in motivating and supporting all learners.

10. Provision and resources

The school offers a varied curriculum and teaching and learning provision to meet a diversity of students' needs. Although classes are small, typically no more than 8 and mixed ability, class teachers have the flexibility to set smaller ability groups, within their class.

ICT and multimedia learning resources are available in all classrooms to support and extend students' learning.

The deputy headteacher is responsible for developing, monitoring and evaluating the curriculum and the teaching and learning that is delivered within it.

Every class has access to a teaching assistant, whose key role is to improve curriculum access, and extend and consolidate students' learning during their learning support work.

All teaching staff are responsible for ensuring that their classroom displays are regularly renewed, and contribute to extending and supporting students' learning.

The school will deliver 'Focus Events' such as Multi-cultural awareness, Healthy Living, Citizenship, Talent day, Enterprise and Careers Focus. These are PSHCE activity days, when students engage in experiential/interactive learning.

11. Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process.

The Schools assessment process is comprehensive and holistic. The process is focused on developing a comprehensive picture of a student's academic starting points alongside the equally as important personal, social and emotional needs. Due to the nature and type of our students, (SEND/SEMH, long periods out of school, high anxiety and school phobias etc) it is our belief that addressing a student's social and emotional needs and developing their 'readiness to learn' is an essential part of the assessment process and the overall learning journey.

Social and emotional baseline assessment methods

To effectively develop an up to date and accurate picture as possible for students' social and emotional needs, the school takes account of existing information including previous school assessments, Education Health and Care Plans, Educational Psychologists reports, Interviews and pre-enrolment assessments alongside testimonies from parents, carers and relevant professionals.

The school also utilises a range of assessment tools to inform the setting of appropriate Personal, Social and Emotional targets for students these include; Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) and Skills for Learning Assessments. Boxall Assessments are also utilised where appropriate, to support the school team to develop strategies for behaviour and engagement. The results of these are recorded through the student pen profiles to support teachers to improve their differentiation, take account of learning styles and develop high quality learning experiences.

Academic assessment methods

The school utilises the Pearson Progression Service and Active Learn platform to accurately assess those students who are following a GCSE route for English and Maths. For students undertaking Functional Skills, the school utilises the BKSB platform to accurately assess students.

Due to the diverse needs of our students and the varied starting points students will be assessed against both the Pearson

Progression scale and the BKS Profile. PPS will be used to determine the current GCSE level whilst BKS will be used to determine the current Functional Skills level. Students assessed as GCSE Grade 3 or below in KS4 will follow the Functional Skills route.

Decisions will be made on a case by case basis regarding the qualification route that students will follow and will take into account SEND/SEMH needs and personal, social factors.

The purpose of assessment at the School is:

- To improve standards so that students can celebrate their success, achieve their aspirational goals and maximise their potential in the context of the school mission statement;
- To help teachers teach more effectively and to adopt a more personalised approach to students' learning needs;
- To provide relevant and accurate information about students and their performance which can then be used in a variety of contexts by all stakeholders.

10 Key principles of our assessment process:

- Assessments are valid, reliable, accurate, accessible and well planned in accordance with subject schemes of learning and teaching.
- Assessments take place in a variety of formats.
- Students will receive feedback following assessments either in written and / or verbal form.
- Formal assessments will take place at least once each half term and these pieces will be expected to be marked in detail. These marks will form part of the evidence base for interim assessments.
- Formal assessment results will be recorded in a format which allows appropriate school staff to monitor the data and oversee intervention strategies for academic and social/emotional plans
- Assessments will be used to inform the interim assessment process, reports and setting procedures.
- Assessments will be moderated with consistency
- Assessments will be used to celebrate student achievement where appropriate.
- Assessments will be used to measure progress and indicate the next steps in learning.
- Assessments will be used to track progress and performance for students across the curriculum as a means of raising attainment.

All students are entitled to have their learning achievements and progression recognised and this policy incorporates assessment, recording and reporting. This policy is consistently followed by all staff.

All teachers observe, assess, reflect and review the achievements of each student on a regular basis. All teachers alongside the behaviour, attendance and pastoral team keep detailed assessment records on all of the students they teach. Every student is fully involved in the assessment process through the sitting of formal assessments, self-appraisal and target setting. They take the responsibility for setting their own targets through the use of Student Passports which have been developed based on the work of the EEF. Additionally, we canvass the opinions of parents, carers and legal guardians alongside appropriate professionals in order to build an accurate picture of our students.

Students will know the GCSE grade level of attainment they are operating at for English and Maths and/or other subjects as appropriate relative to starting points (i.e. when they joined the school) and year groups.

Students will also know what they have to do to reach the next level. Students are set academic targets which are ambitious and challenging.

Assessment is viewed as an ongoing process, which takes account of students' different rates of learning development.

End of unit tests and external examinations are useful forms of summative assessment. The outcomes from these tests, as well as ongoing teacher formative assessment, provide parents/carers with evidence of their child's learning achievements.

Teachers make ongoing observations of students' learning in their lessons. They also regularly analyse students' work, in order to identify their learning needs.

Assessment also informs continuity and progression in students' learning, as they move from one teacher or class to

another. Students' learning achievements are also recognised through teachers' verbal praise, having their work displayed in the classroom, the awarding of points and certificates of achievement, and opportunities to celebrate students' learning achievements in school assemblies and other forums alongside the weekly rewards activity system.

Work is marked regularly, and constructive feedback is provided to students who are encouraged to respond in a different colour. Many of the students find revisiting and reworking work difficult because of their diagnosis of autism and individual needs are taken into account by staff.

12. Professional Development

Expanse Learning recognise that training for all staff is crucial to the successful implementation of this teaching and learning policy. The senior leadership team and governing body support and encourage in-service training for staff, in relation to improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Training is provided in house, by consultants, or external providers. The purpose of INSET is to enable staff to appreciate that effective teaching, learning & assessment enhances the learning of all children, and extends their teaching repertoire. It also enables teachers to feel more confident and better equipped to meet a diversity of learning needs. In addition, it encourages the staff to take greater responsibility for identifying their own continuing professional development needs.

13. Parental involvement and partnerships

The school endeavours to work very closely with parents and carers in order to help students achieve their optimum potential and overcome any barriers to learning. The school recognises the importance of a positive partnership with parents/carers.

Parents and carers are viewed as essential partners in the learning process. Activities undertaken beyond the classroom rely on the support of parents/carers to ensure success. Parents/carers are encouraged to attend parent's events and student's annual reviews meetings.

Alternative arrangements can be made regarding telephone contact, or home visits to meet with parents/carers; in order to discuss their child's progress in learning. Any parents/carers who have concerns about their child's learning are invited to make an appointment with the relevant member of staff.

Good open, two-way communication between home and school is essential.

14. Monitoring the policy

The SLT will annually review the teaching and learning policy as part of the whole-school self-evaluation procedure. The effectiveness of the policy in raising standards in the quality of teaching and learning is evaluated using the following performance indicators:

- Analysis of student attainment data.
- Scrutiny of teacher planning.
- Lesson observations.
- Analysis of teachers' marking and comments on students' written work.
- Tracking individual students, or cohorts of students.
- Sampling of reports to parents on student progress; discussions with students about their progress.
- Discussions with teachers about student progress.
- Evaluation of the impact of additional resources, e.g. teaching assistants, IT and multimedia.
- Evidence from parental and student surveys/questionnaires.
- Evidence from subject audits.
- Success in meeting teaching and learning priorities on the school improvement plan.
- Reduction in numbers of students excluded from school.
- Reports from external consultants.

Impact of non-compliance

Staff:	Disciplinary action
Student:	Not applicable
Legislation/organisational:	Reputational damage, litigation, statutory and non-regulated compliance. prosecution
Compliance lead:	Headteacher/Director of Schools
Policy Reference:	ELWS-OPR-019
Version:	3
Agreed policy location:	Employee Portal: Documents/Policies 2018-19/The School/Operational/ELWS-OPR-019(v1) – Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy
Does the policy require Governor approval?	No

Approval

Prepared by Ed Hanley 01/09/2021  Assistant Headteacher	Approved by Tony Brown 01/09/2021  CEO	Counter Signatory Richard King 01/09/2021  Director of Schools, Pre 16 Education
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Version Control

Version	Date	Revision	Review Date
1	01/09/2019	First Issue	31/08/2020
2	01/09/2020	Review	31/08/2021
3	01/9/2021	Policy Reviewed	31/08/2022
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