

Cantonian High School Ysgol Uwchradd Cantonian



Learning & Teaching Policy

January 2009

CANTONIAN HIGH SCHOOL: LEARNING & TEACHING POLICY

This policy was adopted by Governors
on.....

General

This policy is an internal school policy. It has been discussed with governors, staff, and representatives of parents and pupils.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to improve continuously the learning and achievement of pupils in the school. It applies to all members of the school community but especially to governors and members of the teaching staff.

Since knowledge about effective teaching and promoting good learning is increasing and being refined continually, this policy does not provide a manual of what should be done. This is contained in the school's supporting material for use with this policy, which is updated regularly. This policy expresses the general principles that should inform good teaching and learning within the school and promotes continuous improvement.

There is considerable overlap between policies which aim to ensure good teaching and those which aim to promote good learning. However, this policy does separate them in order to distinguish between teaching, which is directly under the control of teachers, and learning, which the school promotes but which is done by the pupils.

Other References

Note: This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies e.g. Assessment; Marking and Reporting; SEN and Accessibility Policies along with the Behaviour policy.

Learning

Purpose

The purpose of the learning aspect of the policy is to ensure that the learning of pupils is systematically supported, guided and encouraged so that they become effective learners; understanding how they learn; possessing a range of effective study techniques; and taking responsibility for their own learning.

All staff are responsible for creating the conditions for good learning.

Conditions for Good Learning

Good learning occurs when the conditions are right for it to do so. Pupils can be encouraged or discouraged, enabled or disabled from learning by the management of the school and the learning environment.

The conditions for learning are:

1. A climate within the school and the individual classroom that is:
 - Orderly;
 - Characterised by mutual respect between teachers and learners;
 - Confidence enhancing; and
 - Challenging.
2. A commitment to high aspirations shared by teachers and all pupils.
3. Attention to the different learning styles of pupils.
NB: We are aware that there are various ways of describing these but we accept the importance of recognising that learning styles differ and that pupils who are able to use their own learning style increase in confidence and learn more effectively.
4. Effective and prompt assessment of progress.
5. Marking and feedback, whether verbal and informal or written and formal, which encourages, is related to understood criteria and which shows the pupil clearly what is required to improve.
6. Effective links with parents to encourage high aspirations for their children in order to improve parents' understanding of the content, purpose and procedures of the teaching in the school; and to encourage parents to assist the school in developing their children. As part of this we:
 - Give parents information on courses, homework and examinations;
 - Give parents adequate, clear and timely information about their child's progress;
 - Ensure that parents receive warnings of any of their child's shortcomings as early as possible and are also given information of good work that the child has done as soon as possible; and
 - Provide parents with easy ways to communicate concerns, interest or questions.

7. Monitoring, evaluation and review of the attitudes and achievements of individuals and groups which identifies key success factors and implements plans based on the process of review.

Additional Learning Needs, including Disabilities

All these conditions have to be in place for pupils with Additional Learning Needs and Disabilities to thrive. It is particularly important for these pupils to encourage aspiration and to make appropriate adjustments to make learning accessible. This will involve close co-operation with staff supporting pupils with these needs. It may involve the use of various aids to access (mechanical and technological) and adjustments to lesson and classroom organisation. (See SEN Policy.)

Responsibilities

Head/Senior Management Team

To create the conditions for good learning throughout their school they will:

- promote learning to parents and pupils;
- promote whole school approaches that encourage enthusiasm for learning and continuous improvement among pupils;
- monitor attitudes to learning across the school, by subject and by groups of pupils;
- monitor achievement across the school, by subject and by groups of pupils;
- evaluate findings and develop approaches to improve attitudes and achievement continuously;
- establish a programme to develop pupils' study skills and their understanding of their own learning, either as a discrete programme or as part of every subject's work;
- intervene where attitudes and attainment are low;
- ensure that all staff are appropriately trained, and are fit and competent to teach in the programmes of study that they are directed to participate in; and
- implement arrangements for the regular monitoring and review of the policy and strategies.

The Head is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the policy and reporting annually on its progress to the governing body.

Subject Leader

To create the conditions for good learning within their subject they will:

- inspire pupils' interest in the subject by promoting it in every way;
- be a leader to staff in the subject in encouraging them to promote the subject and inspire pupils with and interest in it;
- be a leader of staff in the subject in understanding pupils' learning and using this understanding by applying it to their lessons; and
- monitor the attitudes and achievements of the whole school and groups of pupils in the subject.
- develop approaches to improve attitudes and achievement continuously;
- support staff teaching the subject to create the conditions for learning;
- intervene where pupils' attitudes and attainment in the subject are low;
- devise materials to assist pupils to meet coursework and examination requirements; and

ensure that all staff are appropriately trained in relevant teaching and learning strategies, and are competent to teach their subject(s).

Learning Leader

The responsibility of Learning Leader is to encourage positive attitudes and aspirations among pupils and help them to develop the skills for study and take responsibility for their own learning. They will:

- encourage enthusiasm for study and learning among their pupils;
- monitor achievement and enthusiasm for learning across subjects;
- liaise with subject staff where enthusiasm is greater or less than average;
- counsel and mentor pupils to encourage confidence and aspiration and good work habits; and
- liaise with parents to improve attitudes, advise on courses and encourage high aspirations.

Classroom Staff

(NB: It is the policy of this school that whatever management responsibilities are held, once in a classroom all teachers are classroom teachers and that these responsibilities apply to all classroom teachers equally.)

Classroom staff are responsible for creating conditions for good learning with the groups for which they are responsible. They will:

- demonstrate high aspirations for pupils and make high demands of them
- plan lessons that are accessible to all pupils in the class to build confidence of all members of the class
- plan lessons that appeal to the interests of all members of the class to create enthusiasm and commitment in all members of the class
- assist pupils in developing skills of organisation and a willingness to persevere when work is hard
- report back to pupils on their progress in ways that celebrate success and encourage them to address problems and aspire to continuous improvement
- monitor and evaluate the commitment and enthusiasm of pupils and continually review and modify teaching approaches to take account of these reviews
- ensure that they keep up-to-date with appropriate learning and teaching strategies and techniques in their subject(s).

Teaching

The purpose of this policy with regard to teaching is to ensure that teaching in the school is as good as possible and to set out the standards expected and the responsibilities of all members of the school community to meeting them.

Responsibilities

Governors

It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to monitor this policy and to ensure that it is regularly reviewed. In particular the Governing Body will monitor:

- the outcomes of the policy in terms of results and added value in examinations and the numbers of pupils continuing to pursue their education
- the enthusiasm that pupils show for their lessons
- the outcomes of observations conducted by SMT / Subject leaders / Transition leaders
- the comments of inspectors
- the comments of parents.

Note: Governors are not required personally to inspect or monitor directly, that is the function of senior staff. However, they should ensure, by receiving reports, visiting the school and asking appropriate questions, that these functions are being carried out.

Head/Senior Management Team

The responsibilities of the Head and the Senior Management Team are to set the objectives for teaching; to ensure that a system is in place to support and improve teaching and learning; and to inspire teachers to improve teaching continuously. They will:

- ensure that teaching can take place within an ordered environment;
- ensure that team leaders are fulfilling their role in improving teaching and leading their teams in that improvement;
- ensure that a system is in place to develop teachers' skills, knowledge and understanding of teaching, through CPD, Inset, external courses or otherwise;
- ensure that a system is in place to spread good practice rapidly across the school;
- ensure that the organisation of the school day and year support good teaching;
- ensure that other school policies and systems support this policy (e.g. Performance Management; Resource management; Homework, Assessment and Feedback policies and procedures; and Staff Competency Procedures);
- monitor the effectiveness of teaching; and
- intervene where teaching falls below the standard expected.

Subject Leaders

The responsibility of Subject Leaders is to lead and inspire their team to improve their teaching; to ensure that the systems within the subject promote good teaching; and to be responsible for the quality of teaching in the subject. They will:

- provide schemes of work and recommendations for teaching approaches that reflect best practice locally and nationally;
- organise teaching materials and resources, the timetable for the subject and the deployment of staff to best effect;
- ensure that support staff and cover staff are able to play a full part in ensuring high quality teaching of the subject;
- monitor and evaluate teaching in the subject;
- intervene where teaching falls below the standard required;
- ensure that good practice is spread between teachers of the subject;
- use the Performance Management procedures of the school to promote the development of teachers in the subject; and
- ensure that cover staff are fully aware of their responsibilities and the work they are expected to cover with the class and to ensure that they are informed, supported and fulfil the requirements of the class.

Classroom Teachers

The responsibility of Classroom teachers is to improve continuously their knowledge, skills and understanding of teaching and to apply these consistently and conscientiously. They will:

- create the appropriate climate for learning within their classroom;
- update regularly their subject knowledge;
- update regularly their knowledge of examination requirements;
- update their knowledge of pedagogy i.e. the understanding of children's learning and the appropriate way of teaching to make the most of this knowledge;
- update their personal mastery of the technology available to support teaching;
- assess the abilities, aptitudes, learning styles and personality of the pupils in each group and organise and plan lessons appropriately;
- provide effective reports on progress to pupils and parents;
- share with colleagues within and outside the subject ideas on how to improve teaching; and
- liaise with support and cover teachers to ensure continuity of work for their classes and progress by pupils requiring additional support.

Support Staff and Cover Staff

Support staff and cover staff are responsible for ensuring that there is continuity between the work planned by the class teacher and the work which they do with the class or an individual. They will:

- make sure that they are aware how the work they are doing fits into the programme for the class;
- ensure that where possible they liaise with the class teacher or the Subject Leader;
- ensure that the climate in the classroom, where that is their responsibility, is appropriate to learning;
- ensure that, where applicable, homework is set and work taken in and handed over to the Subject Leader;
- liaise with the class teacher, where applicable, to ensure that work is assessed and feedback given in accordance with the policy laid down for the subject.

Learning Leader

The responsibility of Learning Leader in regard to teaching is to monitor the progress of pupils for whom they are responsible and to liaise on their progress with other staff and parents. They will:

- monitor pupils' results across all subjects to see whether there are any anomalies and bring to the attention of other staff;
- monitor pupils' results against predicted performance and bring under- or over-performance to the attention of other staff;
- work with pupils and their parents to ensure that subject choices are made that will maximise pupil achievement; and
- share in devising a study-skills programme that will enable pupils to plan and schedule work effectively and in particular prepare for examinations and coursework.

Schemes of Work

Good teaching starts with good schemes of work. Subject Leaders will ensure that schemes of work:

- take full account of the National Curriculum but are not limited by it;
- specify content and methodology in accordance with best local and national practice;
- describe the resources needed and available for each topic;
- describe appropriate approaches to topics;
- are reviewed and updated regularly to reflect current thinking;
- give guidance on lesson-planning consistent with this policy and other school guidance;
- specify approaches to assessment and reporting to pupils and parents.

Lesson Planning

The precise approach to lesson planning will vary from subject to subject and it is impractical to lay down precise rules that will cover every possibility. However, it is expected that lessons will include planning that will cover:

- ensuring pace and shape in the lesson with, where appropriate a 3-part/4-part lesson structure including starter activities and 'plenary' review of progress in the lesson;
- ensuring that there are varying opportunities for learning e.g. interactive work; work with ICT; collaborative learning; individual study and report;
- identifying work that is suitable for the pupil's age, abilities, learning styles and personality types. This is not only a matter of making adjustments for pupils with disabilities but also covers pupils with no disability but whose style of learning differs from that of others in the group or that of the teacher; and
- arrangements for assessment of learning, formal or informal, that can lead into effective feedback to pupils and shape the teacher's planning for ensuing lessons in accordance with the school's assessment policy.

Review

In order to ensure that it reflects current best practice, this policy will be reviewed every two years.

The next review date is: autumn 2011

Signed: _____
Headteacher