SIR THOMAS RICH'S
Learning and Teaching Policy

Date reviewed: May 2023
Status: Non-statutory
Responsibility: This Statement will be reviewed by Governors regularly, as part of their system of reviewing School Policies.

Contents

1. Introduction

The Learning and Teaching policy should be read in conjunction with the Curriculum policy and the Assessment, Recording and Reporting policy. This policy sets out the minimum learning and teaching standards expected.

Sir Thomas Rich's defines learning as: a complex process often rooted in successful relationships. It is, to some extent, culturally dependent. It involves the development of understanding through acquisition and retention of powerful knowledge and metacognition. Powerful knowledge provides 'reliable explanations and understanding of key research and established orthodoxies as well as new ways of thinking about concepts' (Young, 2008) which help learners go beyond their original experiences and enables them to envisage alternatives, think creatively and critically. Learning is also about enabling individuals to think in different ways and developing intellectual curiosity where learners become specifically curious and can navigate the dialogue between a full understanding of the established orthodoxies, methods and theories and their own creative and original thinking.

2. The School's Aims

The primary aims of the School are to enable all pupils to develop self-discipline, a thirst for learning, enquiring and creative minds and an appreciation of our heritage. The School encourages and expects pupils to work to the best of their abilities to achieve the highest possible academic standards and to make, or exceed, expected progress (+ VA) during their school career.

A broad, balanced and rich curriculum is offered where pupils are expected to be given opportunities to develop and apply the knowledge and skills that will prepare them well for the next stage in their education, training or employment and enable them to take responsible places in adult life.

The School aims to know its pupils well as individuals in a relaxed, friendly yet purposeful and disciplined environment that is organised to create high expectations, encourage positive relationships, build resilience and enable all learners to reflect upon their progress.

Achievement of these aims depends upon the exercise of high-level professional skills by all teaching staff where organisation, lesson planning, resource preparation and assessment and reflection underpin effective practice. The School does not advocate a particular method of teaching or show preference towards a specific lesson structure yet it encourages teachers to follow the principles of Quality First Teaching.[1] A broad library of CPD material is provided for teachers to read and utilise to further cement these principles.

3. Lesson Planning

Teachers should plan lessons in which learning objectives related to the scheme of work are made explicit. Pupils should be able to make links with previous and future learning and be given opportunities to apply their knowledge in different contexts and across the curriculum.

Pupils in the different groups should be identified e.g. Pupil Premium, SEND and provision for these pupils should be incorporated clearly into the lesson plan and through the use of seating plans.

Appropriate materials and resources should be ready for use and the lesson time should be utilised effectively. The teacher should have a thorough knowledge of the subject content to be covered in the lesson and know when and how pupils' understanding will be checked.

Teachers should facilitate the development of literacy, numeracy and other transferable learning skills through learning activities and assessments. in accordance with the school's policy and the department's common approach.

Teachers may wish to use the School's lesson planning pro forma; this is not a requirement. Teacher's may also wish to use the School's lesson observation pro-forma when planning their lessons.

4. Meeting the Curriculum Aims

Teachers should expect pupils to work hard. Similarly, teachers should create an environment where pupils want to learn and where they can discover their individual interests and talents.

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[1] Highly focused lesson design with sharp objectives; high demands of pupil involvement and engagement with their learning; high levels of interaction for all pupils; appropriate use of teacher questioning, modelling and explaining; an emphasis on learning through dialogue, with regular opportunities for pupils to talk both individually and in groups; an expectation that pupils will accept responsibility for their own learning and work independently; regular use of encouragement and authentic praise to engage and motivate pupils. *Personalised learning – a practical guide* DCSF (2008) 00844-2008DOM-EN

Learning activities should provide pupils with high levels of core knowledge and understanding whilst facilitating long-term retention of knowledge and skills. An understanding of each subject's established orthodoxies, methods and theories should offer pupils opportunities to learn independently using a variety of sources under the guidance of the teacher.

Tasks and activities where pupils are made to think for themselves should encourage pupils to question, analyse, evaluate, synthesise, justify and hypothesise. Teachers should take an active role in supporting pupils to develop resilience and take risks when faced with challenging or difficult tasks.

5. Progress and Assessment for Learning

The use of plenaries in lessons should assess progress and consolidate learning. Questioning should be used by the teacher to assess understanding, challenge pupils, encourage deeper learning and check knowledge retention.

Homework should be set and feedback given in accordance with school and departmental policies. Tasks should consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding that learners have acquired during the lesson as well as aid the development of long-term memory by linking homework activities to previous and future learning. All pupils should be given frequent opportunities to reflect on their own progress through responding to feedback and by seeking clarification and self-correcting under the guidance of the teacher.

Pupils should be encouraged to articulate their learning. They should know the level or grade at which they are working and this should be made explicit in lessons and in assessments.

Pupils should also be able to contextualise their learning and understand the success criteria that will enable them to progress to the next level or grade. Clear and explicit targets should be set by the teacher and the student so that learners understand how they are going to improve.

6. Expectations and Relationships

Pupils should understand what is expected of them in terms of Approach to Learning, attainment and behaviour. Instructions and explanations should be clear and specific and routines should be embedded so that pupils can demonstrate independence and take responsibility for their learning.

The highest standards of effort, accuracy, presentation and verbal communication should be encouraged and exemplars should be used to model these expectations.

Pupils should gain regular and specifically focused praise for effort and achievement using the School and Department rewards policy. Prompt and effective action should be taken to eradicate unacceptable behaviour, involving the Head of Department, Form Tutor or Head of Year, if appropriate.

7. Interventions

Planned interventions by the teacher, Form Tutor, Head of Department or Head of Year should support pupils and help them to progress in their learning and personal development e.g. extra tuition from a peer coach. Interventions should be informed by accurate knowledge of pupils' previous learning, effort and attainment and by high expectations of their progress. Teachers should know the expected impact of these interventions and be able to evaluate the difference that the intervention(s) have made to pupil progress and development.

8. Evaluation of Learning and Teaching

Feedback should be given using the lesson observation pro-forma provided on School IP. Training and instructions will be provided to all teachers and line managers on how to use the software correctly. The teacher's and the observer's reflections may inform areas for development (with reference to the Teachers' Standards) and identify CPD opportunities. These should be incorporated into the objectives set as part of the annual appraisal cycle. Teachers are encouraged to peer observe to reflect on their own practice and share outstanding practice. The Senior Leadership Team will evaluate Learning and Teaching through paired lesson observations with Line Managers and as part of Department reviews.

Appendix 1   Links to Educational Research

Bjork, E. L., & Bjork, R. A. (2011). Making things hard on yourself, but in a good way: Creating desirable difficulties to enhance learning. In M.A. Gernsbacher, et al (Ed) Psychology and the real world: Essays illustrating fundamental contributions to society, New York: Worth Publishers (p56-64). https://bjorklab.psych.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2016/04/EBjork_RBjork_2011.pdf

Bjork, R. A. (2016) How We Learn Versus How We Think We Learn. Recorded on 02/17/2016. UCTV. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxZzoVp5jmI

Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (2009) Developing the theory of formative assessment. Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability, 21(1), pp.5-31. \\strs\dfs\File Exchanges\Staff\Admin\LEARNING&TEACHING\Research

Black, P., Harrison, C., Lee, C., Marshall, B., & Wiliam, D. (2004). Working inside the Black Box: Assessment for Learning in the Classroom. Phi Delta Kappan, 86(1), 8–21. \\strs\dfs\File Exchanges\Staff\Admin\LEARNING&TEACHING\Research

Coe, R., Aloisi, C., Higgins, S., & Major, L. E. (2014) What makes great teaching. Review of the underpinning research. Durham University: UK. Available at: http://bit.ly/2OvmvKO

Coe, R. (2013) Improving Education: A triumph of hope over experience. Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring. Accessible from: http://www.cem.org/attachments/publications/ImprovingEducation2013.pdf

Cordingley, P., Higgins, S., Greany, T., Buckler, N., Coles-Jordan, D., Crisp, B., Saunders, L. & Coe, R. (2015) Developing Great Teaching. Accessible from: https://tdtrust.org/about/dgt.

Education Endowment Foundation (2018) Sutton Trust-Education Endowment Foundation Teaching and Learning Toolkit: Accessible from: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit

Education Endowment Foundation (2016) A marked improvement? A review of the evidence on written marking. Accessible from: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/EEF_Marking_Review_April_2016.pdf.

Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007) The Power of Feedback. Review of Educational Research, 77(1), 81–112. \\strs\dfs\File Exchanges\Staff\Admin\LEARNING&TEACHING\Research

Hattie, J. (2012) Visible Learning for Teachers. Oxford: Routledge

Hattie J. (2013) Why are so many of our teachers and schools so successful? Recorded on 22/11/13. TEDxNorrkoping. Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rzwJXUieD0U

Rosenshine, B. (2012) Principles of Instruction: Research-based strategies that all teachers should know. American Educator, 12–20. \\strs\dfs\File Exchanges\Staff\Admin\LEARNING&TEACHING\Research

Ryan, R. Deci, E. (2000) *Self-Determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development, and Well-Being.* American Psychologist, Vol.55, No.1, pp. 68-78 https://selfdeterminationtheory.org/SDT/documents/2000_RyanDeci_SDT.pdf

Sweller, J., Ayres, P., Kalyuga, S. (2011) Cognitive Load Theory. Springer, New York

Willingham, D. T. (2009) Why don't students like school? San Francisco, CA: JosseyBass. https://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/periodicals/WILLINGHAM%282%29.pdf

Young, M (2008) From constructivism to realism in the sociology of the curriculum. *Review of Research in Education*, No. *32*: 1–32.