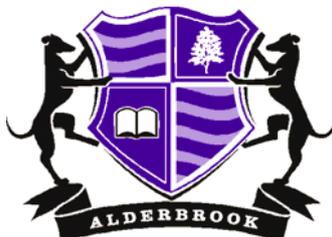


# Alderbrook School



## TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

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## Teaching and Learning Policy

The aims of this document are to set out a clear set of high expectations and a common approach to teaching and learning at Alderbrook School so that teachers, parents/carers and students are all aware of and can work towards the highest possible standards of education. It is designed in such a way that whilst teaching staff are encouraged to adopt a style of their own and are not expected to teach in any specific way, regular monitoring of teaching and learning takes place to ensure that high standards are always met and ensure the best outcomes for students. We aim to encourage enthusiastic, flexible, creative, resilient, resourceful, independent, lifelong learners.

We believe that all learners can make progress and that academic skills can be developed. Learning is an active process of constructing knowledge and developing meaning and best occurs when students have the opportunity to make sense of new content, practise and embed information and skills.

We work in a culture that celebrates effort and the learning journey, where 'making mistakes', and 'being confused' are an important part of learning. We are aware that all pupils have different needs and we endeavour to cater for each individual to support them to make progress.

### **To achieve this we shall offer a curriculum that:**

- Is inclusive
- Is designed to develop both knowledge and understanding, and to review this to embed learning
- Is coherent, relevant and life enhancing and aims to give individuals a positive attitude to life and the valuable part he or she might play in it
- Is appropriately challenging for different groups of learners according to learning need
- Is organised in such a way that each learning experience is stimulating and worthwhile in itself and also part of a systematically planned programme of work
- Is broad and balanced at Key Stage 3
- Is increasingly specialised at Key Stage 4, chosen from a broad range of courses
- Recognises, respects and celebrates diversity in all its forms
- Offers learners the opportunity and encouragement to attain the standards of which they are capable, to take proper pride in those achievements and respect the achievements of their peers
- Offers appropriate support for those pupils with specific learning difficulties, so that they can access subject content.

Underpinning this curriculum are values intended to develop learners' relationships with each other, other adults, the community and environment. In particular, the school values the whole individual, paying attention to moral, social, emotional, spiritual, cultural and physical development. The qualities of respect and responsibility are prized and reflected in our everyday interactions, but are also a core part of learning.

### **The teacher as learner:**

Effective teachers will be searching out new ideas and approaches in order to provide students with the very best learning opportunities. They are advanced learners themselves and keen to develop new skills and insights. They recognise that their personal and professional growth will have a

profound impact on student development. They have the highest expectations of themselves and the students in their care. The Lesson Studies Programme (CPD) underpins this philosophy as staff spend time evaluating their practice, exploring strategies and measuring their impact. Staff are given opportunities to attend courses for their personal professional development particularly where this aligns with the development of the new curriculum and their own appraisal objectives. The appraisal process sits at the heart of the CPD programme, as staff identify aspects of teaching they want to develop and improve. The school makes provision for staff training through a further programme of voluntary internal training opportunities that allows staff to share their expertise and move forward together.

Through the evaluation of strategies to 'diminish differences' for specific groups of students, seven areas of teaching have been identified as having the 'highest impact' on progress:

Relationships/knowing students well and using data to inform planning.  
Feedback  
Independent learning  
Embedding learning  
Questioning and 'assessment for learning'  
Engagement  
Challenge and differentiation

These seven areas form the framework for lesson observations at Alderbrook and are supported by a 'Teaching and Learning Handbook' (**Appendix 1**) to encourage consistency, high expectations and share best practice.

The evaluation of teaching at Alderbrook School is also based on these seven areas of pedagogy. (**Appendix 2**).

## The conditions and climate for learning

We aim to provide a climate in which pupils are willing and able to learn. In particular, we aim to support student self-esteem, as this is central to a student's ability to learn and develop. The learning climate should be purposeful and orderly with a useful working environment including the display of whole school 'posters' to promote consistency, including presentation of work, effort and behaviour grades, behaviour steps, marking codes and growth mind-set. Expectations should be high and learning objectives communicated clearly. Discipline should be firm and support the right of individuals to work without distraction or interference.

To achieve this, **the individual teacher** will endeavour to:

- Uphold and encourage qualities of honour, respect and responsibility.
- Offer pupils a variety of engaging learning opportunities
- Adhere to lesson timings, welcoming pupils and exiting them calmly and promptly, encouraging movement in between lessons to be brisk.
- Take advantage, where appropriate, of learning that can be enhanced by community and local opportunities
- Celebrate achievement in all its forms, particularly making an effort to encourage a 'growth mind-set' in our students.

- Recognise the importance of the working environment and make challenging and interactive use of the available display space.
- Support the behaviour code to ensure that behaviour standards are maintained

## Planning for Progress:

It is important that teachers plan schemes of work and deliver lessons that enable students to work towards the learning objectives and make progress towards the success criteria. It is acknowledged that different teachers have their own preferred styles of teaching but it is imperative that the agreed criteria are followed to ensure the best outcomes for all students in all lessons. The ultimate aim is to ensure that thorough planning and focussed lesson implementation aids students in their quest to make progress over time.

Staff at Alderbrook have a shared vision of strong teaching, and its impact on learners. Please refer to **appendix 1: house style lesson planning grid**. The core purpose of this document is to align the design of a lesson with learner outcome – that the teacher, therefore, is a facilitator of learning and progress. The following documentation supports this understanding:

- 1) Whole school planning tools are available to support staff to consider three important strands of planning: what the teacher does, the impact of this on learners, how the teacher can check progress.
- 2) All teachers will use context sheets, or a similar tool, to support differentiation, seating plans and progress.
- 3) Teachers make carefully planned use of SSAs to support progress.

## Schemes of Work

Medium and long term planning can be presented in a way that best suits the faculty to which they belong. However, it is expected that schemes of work will:

- Clarify objectives and outcomes (including success criteria) for progress over time.
- Identify clearly the subject knowledge to be taught.
- Include references to differentiated work to ensure all students are challenged in line with their ability.
- Detail literacy, numeracy and communication opportunities and how they will be taught.
- Make reference to, or acknowledge the context of the lesson in terms of Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural development as appropriate.
- Make reference to 'skills for success' and habits that can be developed during a particular project.
- Reference specific health and safety aspects.

## Skills for Success:

We uphold the core principle that we are preparing young people for life and as such, we value and promote those skills that will allow young people to be the creative, flexible, resilient young people they will need to become.

More recently, we have worked on aligning the language of Guy Claxton's 'Building Learning Power' with the CBI's employability skills, which has provided Alderbrook with a contextualised understanding of learning skills and habits that young people need to develop that transfers across all learning. Teachers have mapped key skills across the range of subjects, and are encouraged to pronounce these in their teaching. **(Appendix 3)**

## **Independent Learning**

Homework is regarded as an important opportunity to develop independence, and is therefore referred to as 'Independent Learning'. It will often be separate from class work and will take advantage of conditions beyond the classroom for research, investigations, collecting materials and independent reading and writing. Teachers set Independent Learning tasks on an electronic tool: Class charts, so that students and parents receive the information directly.

### **To support 'consistency' across classrooms, the following principles are encouraged in all classrooms:**

- 1) **Teachers should use contextual information** (e.g. disadvantaged, LAC, more/most able, EAL, SEN) to support planning and teaching.
- 2) Teachers should ensure learning objectives and tasks are shared clearly with students and pitched high to ensure enough **challenge**.
- 3) Teachers should make sure that all learners can access the tasks, and **differentiate**, as appropriate ensuring there is high challenge. Some differentiation however, can only be applied effectively following some 'assessment for learning' activities. AFL must accompany a design to affect the next stages of learning. This reshaping may require students to be working differently according to:
  - Tasks
  - Resources
  - Orchestration or organisation of groups
  - Times/duration
  - Support
- 4) Teachers should facilitate **engagement** in their learning. The main task of the lesson requires students to make their own sense of a topic, and convert information/apply learning or practice rather than simply listening, watching or merely transferring information without processing.
- 5) Teachers should make use of a range of '**assessment for learning**' approaches so they are constantly checking understanding and the confidence of all their students. **Questioning** should be used to deepen understanding, engage all students, and check understanding across the class. 'No hands up' is encouraged for engagement and quickly identify misconceptions.

- 6) Teachers provide **feedback** in a timely and supportive manner and empower students to reflect on their misconceptions or difficulties. **Marking** is vital to inform the next steps in learning. Teachers use 'purple' pens, with students self-assessing, peer marking or correcting work in 'green' so that progress is clearer to assess for teachers, students and parents/carers.
- 7) Teachers should provide opportunities for students to **review** lesson content, both within a lesson and across a scheme of work, so students have the opportunity to **embed their learning** over time.
- 8) Teachers should set **Independent Learning tasks** in line with school policy. This should be appropriately challenging, providing meaningful opportunities. Independent Learning is set for students using Class Charts: homework app. so that students and parents can easily access work set and resources to support learning.
- 9) Teachers should be aware of National Curriculum development and new examination syllabi for courses, and **develop engaging lessons with** high quality resources that ensure progress in subject objectives accordingly.

The following area on the shared drive supports this policy and offers a reference for teaching/learning CPD, including the highest impact strategies developing in the ABK toolkit.

My computer/staff/teachers/learning and teaching