

Skipton Girls' High School

## TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

### Objectives of the policy:

This policy aims to clarify the expectations the school has for staff and students in order that our students learn well and make excellent progress in an aspirational and supportive environment.

### School Vision and Values:

- Lead an **Innovative**, Dynamic, Academic environment which is free from gender stereotypes
- **Collaborate** and Partner within and beyond the school
- Prioritise **Inclusion**, diversity, equality and equity and place these at the heart of our learning community
- Deliver **Strong Communication** to all stakeholders

### **Therefore teaching and learning will:**

- Provide students with challenge which meets their individual needs based on their starting points and aspirations;
- Provide opportunities for student leadership of learning;
- Use innovative teaching and learning strategies including digital technologies to maximise learning;
- Promote a belief that 'talent isn't fixed;'
- Build and support students as 'brave' learners and prepare them with skills for life beyond the school;
- Engage students in activities which develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
- Promote STEM education;
- Maximise every opportunity to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths, beliefs, cultures and lifestyles through the effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students;
- Embrace national and international collaborative research based projects;
- Provide accurate information on student progress to report effectively to parents, SLT and Governors;
- Adhere to all Teachers' Standards.

## **Roles & Responsibilities:**

### **Governors**

- To ensure the effective and rigorous implementation and monitoring of the policy;

### **Senior Leadership Team:**

- To provide appropriate support, training and resources for Faculties, subject areas and individual staff;
- To monitor and evaluate the delivery and impact of the policy;
- To modify and update the policy in the light of ongoing developments and the changing needs of the school and its priorities.

### **Learning Directors and Curriculum Leaders:**

- To be responsible for the co-ordination of long, medium and short term planning of schemes of learning, taking into consideration the aims and objectives of the policy;
- To monitor and evaluate consistent delivery of the policy at Faculty and subject level;
- To provide appropriate support to team members by providing training materials, advice and guidance;
- Support staff to take risks in new teaching methods.

### **Teaching staff:**

- To ensure that their own teaching meets the national Teachers Standards; ensuring teaching and learning is consistently good or outstanding;
- To implement this policy by planning and delivering high quality learning experiences;
- To have a growth mind set, be willing to take risks;
- Actively seek to reflect on practice using CPD opportunities to develop both subject and pedagogical expertise;
- Work collaboratively with colleagues to share best practice and improve teaching.

### **All staff:**

- To be aware of the principles of the policy and how they can contribute to it.

### **Students:**

- To work positively within lessons to enable staff to implement the policy effectively;
- To engage with learning experiences outside the classroom by ensuring completion of the learning tasks set as homework.

### **Those with parental responsibility:**

- To support the policy of the School by providing support for students at home, allowing them to continue to develop their learning effectively.

## 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:

- ✓ Provide stretch and challenge at all levels;
- ✓ Clarify objectives and outcomes (including success criteria) for progress over time;
- ✓ Identify clearly the subject knowledge and skills to be taught;
- ✓ Include a variety of activities so that students have choice and opportunity to learn in different ways, including blended learning using digital technologies and/or the VLE;
- ✓ Include references to differentiated work to ensure all students are challenged in line with their ability;
- ✓ Provide opportunities for developing independent and collaborative learning;
- ✓ Detail literacy, numeracy and communication opportunities and how they will be taught;
- ✓ Include opportunities for a variety of assessment for learning strategies;
- ✓ Identify relevant and challenging opportunities for home learning.

## Planning and Preparation:

It is acceptable for teachers to use a variety of methods to plan their teaching on a day-to-day basis whilst meeting the objectives of this policy. This gives teachers the freedom to be creative in their planning in order to offer deep learning experiences un-restricted by a set 'lesson plan.' For formal observations of lessons the 'Planning for Learning' pro-forma should be used along with a set of progress data for the class' clearly identifying 'groups.'

Teachers must plan to ensure that students move forward and make **progress** in their learning every lesson and over time relative to their starting points. Teachers should strive to ensure that their planning allows for the following criteria to be met:

**Use of Context Sheets** – these must be used to record and inform teaching and learning strategies

**Use of assessment in planning** - information from assessments should be used to set tasks that are perfectly matched to students' prior attainment.

**Level of challenge** - work should be pitched at a level that is appropriate to the individual. It is challenging – success is only achievable if individual students work hard and try their very best. All individuals should find the tasks demanding at their own level.

**Opportunities to develop literacy, numeracy, and communication skills** – teaching should include opportunities to develop reading, writing, communication and numeracy skills that are highly effectively taught and cohesively planned as part of the lesson.

**Use of strategies and tasks to engage students** - strategies and tasks should enthuse students so that they persevere when faced with difficult problems and are keen to succeed and learn more.

**Pace and depth of learning** - the pace of learning should be optimised throughout the lesson. Pace of learning should not be confused with pace of activity. As a result, almost all pupils make rapid and sustained progress in their learning.

**Use of questioning** - questions should be designed to tease out students' understanding so that the teacher is exceptionally aware of the degree to which pupils are secure in their knowledge and understanding.

**Assessment of learning during lessons** - the work for each individual student should be adapted in the light of any misconceptions identified through questioning or checks on students' work.

**Use of Teaching Assistants where appropriate** – teachers should give clear direction to any other adults supporting a student in order that this teaching assistance is highly effective in promoting rapid learning for groups of students regardless of their aptitudes and needs.

### **Lesson Delivery:**

All staff should:

- ✓ begin and end lessons on time and in a structured manner establishing clear and appropriate routines;
- ✓ ensure students are prepared for the next lesson;
- ✓ maintain engagement, pace and challenge;
- ✓ ensure that the lesson is planned and is appropriate to the age and ability of the students, using, where appropriate, differentiated materials and resources;
- ✓ have high expectations of student work and behaviour;
- ✓ employ a range of teacher strategies/approaches/activities within a lesson or sequence of lessons and ensure an efficient shift from one activity to the next; identify where it is necessary to change and adapt plans;
- ✓ make effective use of questioning (pitching low order and high order questioning appropriately) and ensure thinking time for students to make connections in their learning;
- ✓ value students' contributions and make use of praise and reward in line with the school's **Behaviour Policy** and **Rewards and Consequences** protocols to underline the value of achievement;
- ✓ ensure students are given feedback on work completed and that they know how to move on to the next level;
- ✓ demonstrate checking of progress during the lesson in a variety of ways;
- ✓ regularly set, monitor and mark home learning;
- ✓ regularly identify key subject specific language; and support literacy development.

### **Marking and feedback** (see the school's **Marking and Feedback Policy**):

This should adhere to the principles and practices outlined in the Marking and Feedback Policy. Marking should be meaningful, manageable and motivating, providing students with timely, clear guidance on how their learning can be improved. Students need to be engaged in the process and teachers should ensure the feed-back has impact on progress.

**Home Learning** (see school's **Guide to Home Learning**) – Home learning should be an integral part of the lesson. It extends the learning and is treated as being as important as the lesson.

### **Principles of home learning at SGHS:**

The purpose of home learning is to develop a student's knowledge and understanding as well as develop healthy study habits that will last a life time. Most of the homework will fall into one of these categories:

- Activities based on lesson content which are designed to consolidate learning from the lesson
- Activities which will prepare students for forthcoming lessons or assessments
- More open ended study which is designed to develop wider understanding of the subject

The balance between these types of homework depends on both the age of the student and their personal disposition. Much of the work at Skipton Girls' High School is personalised to suit the needs of the individual and homework is set with this in mind. There are times when regular weekly tasks in each subject are best suited and other times when there will be a longer term approach.

Similarly, one student's capacity for homework is not the same as another's. Students have very different out of school commitments which clearly have an impact on how much time they have available.

Finally, we want to develop healthy study habits. Homework has a vital place in a student's education but it must be balanced with a student's health and well-being. Teachers will talk with students when homework is not being completed in order to ascertain the reasons. Teachers should also approach students when we feel they are spending too long on tasks when it could have a detrimental effect on their well-being.

### **Monitoring:**

Whilst teaching staff are encouraged to adopt a style that best suits the needs of students in their classes and are not expected to teach in any specific way, regular monitoring of teaching and learning takes place at Skipton Girls' High School to ensure the highest standards and therefore, outcomes for the students.

The annual model for monitoring of teaching and learning is as follows:

*September* - Examinations Review meeting with the Headteacher, SLT line manager and Learning Director. This meeting will explore the outcomes from the summer GCSE and A Level examinations, identifying any strengths and areas for improvement across all subject areas. This meeting will establish the key lines of enquiry for the faculty review process.

*October* - Teachers will review their Appraisal targets from the previous year and will set new targets according to the school's **Appraisal Policy**. A lesson observation and work scrutiny will normally form part of this process.

*Autumn Term* - **Peer Faculty Reviews**. These will involve all faculties which are paired according to SLT line manager. The review will include lesson observations, learning walks, work scrutiny, review of current progress data and student questionnaires to give a well-rounded review of the faculty's strengths, to identify whether they are being sustained, and weaknesses, to inform an action plan for improvement for the year. Teachers will be paired according to need and opportunities for cross-faculty collaboration are encouraged.

*Throughout the year* - there will be periodic lesson observations, learning walks and work scrutiny, both at SLT level and by Learning Directors or Curriculum Leaders as part of their on-going quality assurance processes. Teachers' lessons will be observed formally on an appropriate number of occasions based on individual circumstances and will be by mutual agreement. Skipton Girls' High School operates an 'open door' policy in lessons and both teachers and students are expected to welcome visitors to the classroom.

*Summer Term* - There will be a 'light-touch' review of the faculty action plan to establish that actions have been undertaken and improvements made.

For lesson observations and learning walks the school's pro-formas should be used; both oral and written feed-back will be given to staff in a timely manner.

### **Support for Teachers:**

Staff are supported in improving their teaching in the following ways:

- Observing good practice from colleagues
- Coaching and/or mentoring sessions
- Continuing professional development (CPD) sessions
- Observing good practice at partner schools
- External courses when necessary

The school's **Teacher Support Plans** will be used for the occasions when a structured package of support is needed. These would normally be in place for 6 weeks and would then be reviewed by the Headteacher, SLT line manager or Learning Director. The support plan period may be deemed over if improvements have been made, or the period of support can be extended in discussion with the member of staff.

### **Continuing Professional Development:**

We are committed to providing high quality CPD through a structured programme of events and opportunities throughout the CPD school calendar.

Teachers should:

- Continuously update their subject knowledge and teaching practice in line with current curriculum developments and initiatives;
- Discuss learning and teaching in Faculty Development time in order to share good practice;
- Plan their own CPD programme in conjunction with their Line Manager as a result of the self-evaluation process and by reflecting on the Teacher's Standards document.

### **Implementation of policy**

The implementation of this policy is supported by the following documents:

Marking and Feed-back Policy  
Behaviour Policy  
Appraisal Policy  
Guide to Home learning  
Peer Faculty Review Toolkit  
Context Sheets on Sims  
Planning for Learning pro-forma  
Lesson Observation Record  
Learning Walk Record  
Work Scrutiny Record  
Teacher Support Plan  
Progress Data on Sims and Sisra Analytics  
SEND Policy  
Disability Policy Specific to Exams

This policy will be reviewed and updated regularly and at least on a four yearly basis.

All changes will be immediately communicated to staff.

Policy updated June 2016

Mrs Gill Fisher: AHT Teaching & Learning

Next Review due: June 2019