

Teaching and Learning Policies and Guidelines including EYFS

(Reviewed by SMT, August 2021)

All teachers in every department have a responsibility to deliver lessons where the teaching and learning is of the highest quality and where the learning needs of all students are met.

1. The Aims of the Policy

- To promote an understanding of how learning takes place.
- To promote reflection on, and sharing of, good practice within each and every department.
- To ensure high quality teaching and learning experiences for students of all abilities and aptitudes.
- To provide a framework for teaching and learning within which there is flexibility and scope for creativity and innovation.
- To create a benchmark for monitoring and evaluating the teaching and learning that takes place within the department.
- To provide practical guidance and a focus for development.

2. Effective Learning

Effective learning takes place when:

- every student achieves their academic potential by increasing their levels of motivation, participation and independence;
- the learning environment is secure, ordered, yet challenging and stimulating;
- students understand the purpose of the learning;
- the learning builds on prior knowledge and understanding;
- criteria for success are made explicit, as appropriate;
- student questioning, reflection and discussion are encouraged;
- students know what they need to do to improve and are set appropriate targets;
- the learning is active and collaborative;
- independent working, learning and thinking are facilitated and encouraged;
- there are opportunities for creativity and utilising different learning styles.

The key ingredients of highly effective lessons.

Teaching staff at Hurst have worked collaboratively to distil the key ingredients that we believe are found in highly effective lessons across all phases of the College. These elements have been used to formulate both the Principles of Excellent Teaching and The Principles of Excellent Digital Teaching and should be used by all teaching staff as a reference point for excellent classroom practice.

3. The Learning Experience

This section of the policy sets out expectations regarding planning and preparation, lesson structure and assessment.

Planning and preparation

- Lessons are planned with clear aims and objectives, structure and challenge for all students;
- Objectives are clearly identified;
- Planning provides opportunities for developing a variety of skills;

- Teachers make use of all available information to set clear, realistic, yet challenging targets and to plan differentiated learning opportunities;
- Lessons are planned to build on prior learning and ensure continuity and progression;
- Opportunities for developing literacy, numeracy, ICT skills are integrated into lesson plans wherever possible, alongside opportunities to explore cross curricular, social and moral links;
- Appropriate and stimulating resources are organised prior to the lesson.
- It would be very unusual to show a long section of a video during a lesson, a short clip would be more appropriate where the relevant few minutes should be selected and shown;

Lesson Structure

Start of the Lesson

- The start of the lesson has a clear focus, using activities which immediately engage the learner with the lesson objectives;
- The expected learning outcomes are shared with students, in the context of prior learning, to ensure they understand what they are doing and why;
- The success criteria by which the learning will be evaluated are made explicit;
- The teacher establishes and communicates clear expectations for behaviour.

Lesson Development

The teacher should:

- Make use of research-based teaching strategies and resources to reduce cognitive load and create an optimum learning environment.
- present lessons with clarity, enthusiasm and pace, ensuring timings are clear and that they are adhered to;
- make learning active by providing tasks which enable students to develop understanding and skills;
- provide exemplar work so that students are aware of the sophistication of response expected;
- use a variety of questioning techniques to probe and develop students understanding;
- promote active listening, inviting a range of different responses and building in time for reflection;
- give constructive, positive feedback on work in progress;
- provide opportunities for success for every student and seek frequent opportunities for praise;
- provide increasingly challenging opportunities for progression which increase students' depth of understanding and their application of skills;
- vary groupings and seating arrangements according to the task;
- demonstrate flexibility in their approach and be prepared to deviate from the lesson plan where appropriate;
- set a variety of homework tasks to deepen or extend learning;
- provide pupils with the opportunity to lead the learning in the lesson.

Students should:

- work effectively and purposefully in a range of contexts;
- come fully equipped and prepared to maximise the learning opportunity by taking initiative and being resourceful;
- be prepared to share their learning and ideas and help to create an atmosphere of trust in which passion for learning can flourish;

- ask questions where appropriate – of each other and the teacher;
- support one another, working collaboratively and innovatively, recognising that the contributions of all are valid;
- be prepared to lead the learning process, rather than drift passively;
- know where to go for help and recognise that further progress can always be made;
- be able to select appropriate learning resources to help develop their own learning;
- work with increasing independence, take a more long term view, developing the skills to become life-long learners;
- make increasing use of ICT to develop their learning, accessing a wide variety of sources and using appropriate methods to present their work;
- demonstrate resilience in their approach to learning.

End of the Lesson

- The teacher creates the time to review lesson objectives, learning outcomes and to set further work effectively;
- Students have the opportunity to identify their own progress and set themselves appropriate targets;
- Students receive supportive feedback from the teacher or their peers where appropriate;
- Opportunities are provided to celebrate success;
- The end of the lesson is prompt and orderly, allowing for efficient transition between lessons, students must not be released until the specified end time for the lesson.

4. Assessment of Learning

- Teachers should apply the school's marking policy at all times and produce high quality formative comments that enable pupils to work towards their challenge grades.
- Students receive regular developmental and motivational feedback in a variety of ways to enable them to progress;
- Feedback will include quality written comments that link with the learning objectives and the Challenge Grade System and which recognise the strengths of a piece of work and identify targets for improvement in a constructive, personalised way;
- Students are able to act upon the advice they are given to improve their performance;
- Frequent opportunities are taken within lessons to provide immediate verbal feedback;
- Students are encouraged to assess and evaluate the success of their own work and set themselves targets for their own improvement;
- The language of subject progress is shared with students;
- Students are made aware of the criteria for progression between levels or grades and are enabled to interpret these criteria in a meaningful way;
- Students are encouraged to judge the performance of others within their group, critically, but supportively;
- Levels of work are modelled through display and explanation;
- There will be opportunities for marking to be standardised across a year group.

5. The Learning Environment

This should be organised to ensure that children have the opportunity to:

- work individually and as a class;
- make decisions;
- work co-operatively;
- solve problems;

- be creative;
- discuss their ideas;
- develop independence;
- use initiative;
- receive support;
- achieve academically.

Learning takes place in an environment which:

- is challenging and stimulating;
- takes account of cognitive load;
- is peaceful and calm;
- is happy and caring;
- is organised;
- is well resourced;
- makes learning accessible;
- is encouraging and appreciative;
- is welcoming;
- provides equal opportunities;
- provides a working atmosphere.

Children should be encouraged to develop organisational skills and independence through:

- appropriate tasks;
- example;
- co-operation;
- provision of suitable opportunities;
- responsibilities.

6. Achievement

Social, physical and academic achievements are celebrated in many ways as an on-going process in all aspects of school life by;

- verbal or written praise;
- displays of work;
- opportunities to perform or share;
- encouraging self-esteem;
- recognition in assemblies
- the awarding of stickers, certificates PSHCE awards (displayed in the library);

7. Teaching

Teachers need to have an understanding of ...

- how pupils grow and develop and learn;
- pupils as independent, active learners;
- the skills, knowledge, attitudes and concepts which are the goals of the learning process;
- the importance of effective communication through listening, questioning and discussion;
- the value of appropriate, well-timed interventions in the work of pupils;
- the value of the partnership between home and school;

8. Learning

In order for pupils to achieve we believe that learning experiences should ...

- be matched to the learner's needs and abilities;
- start from where the learner is now;
- be relevant and worthwhile;
- be planned, purposeful and organised;
- enable concepts, knowledge, skills and attitudes to be acquired;
- be practical and first hand;
- provide opportunities for pupils to be involved in planning and evaluating their work where appropriate;
- provide opportunities for pupils to reflect and review

Teachers influence learning by ...

- the quality of the classroom environment they create;
- the nature and quality of their forward planning of activities in relation to time, space and resources;
- providing differentiated programmes to meet the individual needs of pupils;
- the nature and quality of their classroom management;
- monitoring the effectiveness of the planned activities;
- devising assessment strategies and establishing criteria for measuring success;
- keeping, using and sharing records of pupils' progress;
- valuing and celebrating pupils' work.

9. Children

Children should be encouraged to learn from their experiences and mistakes, to think about their own behaviour and to consider the needs and feelings of others.