



Claverham Community College

Teaching and Learning Policy

February 2015

Approved:

M.Whitehead – Chair of Governors'

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Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Teaching and Learning at Claverham Community College	3
1. Getting it right for every learner	3
2. Key principles	4
3. Department Schemes of Work	5
4. Planning Lessons	5
5. Structuring the Learning	6
6. Teaching	7
7. Management and the environment.....	7
8. Assessment.....	7
9. Marking and Feedback	8
10. Recording	8
11. Monitoring	8

Introduction

This policy has been updated following discussion with staff during the autumn, spring and summer terms 2013/14.

The changes to this policy reflect staff views, the new OFSTED framework, outcomes generated from Review Group teaching and learning, lessons and observations made during planned Faculty reviews, questions compiled during Faculty conferences and ongoing Leadership Team drop in sessions.

Teaching and Learning at Claverham Community College

This overview can only provide brief guidance on the key elements of T & L at Claverham. We want to create an effective and well-managed learning environment in which the individual needs of each student are met. It aims to ensure that students are provided with high quality learning experiences that lead to a consistently high level of achievement.

1. Getting it right for every learner

No learner can be fully effective if he or she feels unhappy or troubled or insecure. It is the responsibility of the school community – school staff, pupils, parents and carers, professionals from partner agencies and others in the local community – to work together to ensure that each learner feels safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. Young people think that the teacher has a central role in this process, working with others in the school community to create the right conditions for effective learning.

Young people's ideas about what makes a successful teacher have been surprisingly consistent. These focus on personal qualities – how the teacher (i.e. any person who provides a learning experience including support staff) acts as a role model – building relationships with individuals and the class as a whole, fostering relationships amongst learners.

According to young people, successful teachers are:

- Aspirational - genuinely believe that all learners can succeed
- Assertive - decisive and confident, firm but fair
- Encouraging - positive, supportive, welcoming genuine error as an opportunity to learn
- Enthusiastic - believe in what they are teaching and enjoy the job
- Humorous - show humour naturally and put learners at ease
- Open - prepared to challenge their own thinking and admit they may be wrong
- Respectful - genuinely like young people, care about them, listen to them, enjoy their company and do not disrespect them individually or collectively.

Before we engage with the key principles and characteristics of our policy, we should consider fully the crucial importance of establishing and maintaining good working relationships if successful learning is to take place.

2. Key principles

Our key principles for all learners are:

Engagement and Challenge

Learners need motivation. They should have a significant reason for engaging in the learning process and positive feelings about involvement.

Learners – especially the young – are often self-motivating; they are desperate to find out, know, understand. Learning brings its own emotional and/or intellectual reward. Equally often, though, learners require an external incentive to provide motivation – an award, a certificate, a prize, praise, promotion. To be effective, such incentives must be meaningful to the learner.

As teachers – often through personal example – we should foster a love of learning by nurturing self motivation. But we should also motivate – inspire, challenge and praise. We should show that we value all learners, creating an ethos of achievement and organising tasks which will bring rewards that matter from the learner's point of view.

Participation

Learners need to participate in the learning process. They should be active and take as much responsibility as possible for their own learning.

Learners should lead whenever possible. They should make informed choices about what, where and how they learn; they should self and peer assess where appropriate. Learners should be aware of themselves as learners, conscious of their own preferred styles of learning, confident enough to seek help, perceptive enough to know where help may be best sought, skilful enough to access help readily.

As teachers, we are lifelong learners – a state of mind which should inform our professional practice, development and our own wider learning. Through collegiality, we should create learning communities in our classrooms, establishments and beyond.

Dialogue

Learners need to communicate through verbal and/or multi-sensory dialogue. Research and empirical evidence demonstrate that real understanding takes place when learners work through with someone else what is to be learned and how far they have been successful in their learning.

Learners, where possible, should talk through their learning regularly with their teachers, their peers, parents and others. They should question, answer, expound, challenge assertions, support propositions, offer alternatives, suggest solutions, peer assess ...

As teachers – through personal example and setting standards in our questioning and provision of feedback – we should create the conditions in which communication and dialogue can thrive, where self confidence and respect for others underpin all interaction, where achievement is celebrated and error welcomed as a stepping stone to success.

Thinking

Learners need to think. This thinking should be critical and creative, robust and flexible in order that all may understand and achieve their potential whatever the context.

Learners should be positively critical: questioning, investigating, testing, seeking after the truth about themselves, others and the world in which they live. They should be creative: imagining, expressing, exploring the boundaries of the possible so that there are no limits to ambition.

As teachers we should be thinkers: reflective professionals – self aware, systematically evaluative, focused on our own improvement and that of those in our care. We should use the language of thinkers, ask the questions that matter, enable and empower other learners to ask those questions, so that they and those who respond may make their thinking explicit. Crucially, despite the pressures, we ourselves should take time to think.

3. Department Schemes of Work

These should include:

- national guidelines (NC pos, KS3, exam specifications)
- long term plans providing a brief overall map of what is to be taught by each year group
- medium term plans providing the structure within which teachers can carry out short term planning
- how students' learning will be assessed
- Assessing Pupil Progress (APP) or progress ladders
- allowance for progression and provide challenge
- signposted opportunities for Literacy, Numeracy, ICT, Key Skills, SMSC, Thinking Skills...
- a variety of approaches and learning styles for all activities including class and homework
- differentiation
- homework

4. Planning Lessons (see also Teaching and Learning Protocol)

This helps to ensure teaching time is used effectively and is well focused on what students need to learn to make good progress. Teachers will plan:

- to structure their lessons with the following in mind – creating the climate for learning, setting the scene, how the lesson will be developed and opportunities to review the learning
- individual lessons and sequence of lessons showing how students' learning will be assessed
- to set challenging learning objectives which are relevant to all students
- to provide evidence of progression and reinforcement in the work
- to use well organised and accessible resources and visual aids
- good use of homework time, with a similar variety of style and challenge as in classwork
- provide opportunities for students to support each other in their learning

5. Structuring the Learning

The Claverham lesson structure starts by focusing on the physical, environmental and social factors of learning, it proposes a positive and supportive learning environment.

It then attempts to connect to and build upon prior knowledge and understanding, while presenting an overview of the learning to come.

Information and concepts are presented in visual, auditory and kinaesthetic styles, whichever is appropriate for the meaning to be conveyed to that particular group. Finally, frequent structured opportunities to understand and to rehearse for recall, are the concluding features of the lesson.

Structured lessons allow a variety of patterns of teaching methodology and organisation, depending on a lesson's objectives and its position in a series of lessons. The emphasis is on an oral, interactive and lively approach, a two way process in which students are involved fully involved and delivered at an appropriate pace. Homework can be set at any point.

The recommended approach for the structured lesson consists of:

- 1. Creating the Climate for learning** where students are confident, feel secure and are aware of the boundaries. The teacher should actively plan to create a positive and supportive learning environment in order that the students begin to feel positive about the learning that is about to take place.
- 2. Starter/Introduction;** sharing with the students what they will learn and how it builds on previous knowledge and learning. This part of the session also provides the opportunity to review, sharpen and develop mental skills including recall and thinking skills or focus on skills needed for the main part of the lesson. This is the start of the new learning where learning outcomes are made clear to the students (these are things the student will be able to do at the end of the lesson which they couldn't do at the beginning).
- 3. Main;** Teacher input, student activity, interaction and demonstration of their learning. Students may be working individually, in small groups or as a whole class, with opportunities for the teacher to intervene, clarify, support and provide feedback. New information and concepts should be introduced through as many of the senses as possible (VAK) as deemed appropriate by the teacher. Students should be actively engaged in exploring a new topic using problem solving, investigation and enquiry skills in order to gain a deeper understanding.
- 4. Plenary;** is time that has been planned for collective review so as to draw together what has been learned. It is an opportunity to summarise key points and ideas, identify progress, make links to other work or discussing the next steps and setting targets for what needs to be learnt next. The learning should be reviewed against expected learning outcomes.

6. Teaching

Checklist to reflect on your own teaching. Do I?

- make learning objectives clear to the students
- Teach meaning and concepts in the most appropriate way for learners (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic)
- provide variety, challenge and pace
- promote active and independent learning that enables students to think for themselves and plan to manage their own learning, so that they extend and maximize their core skills
- monitor and assess learning as you teach e.g. through effective questioning, giving constructive feedback to support students as they learn and differentiated to meet the needs of the individual
- support the more able students, those working below age related expectations, those failing to achieve their potential, and those experiencing behavioural and social difficulties
- establish high expectation so that all learners have the opportunity to make good progress
- include opportunities to develop numeracy and literacy and ICT appropriately
- use a variety of teaching methods, type of activity and resources so as to engage and extend learners
- use rewards both in and out of lessons.

7. Management and the environment

- Displays reflect the variety of work undertaken and value all students' work
- Displays act as props to learning, providing opportunities to reinforce and remind
- Use a range of strategies to promote positive attitudes to learning and behaviour so as to create a climate for learning

8. Assessment

Students learn well when learning is planned based on what students know, understand and can do.

Assessment for Learning (Formative) involves both the teacher and student in a process of continual reflection and review about progress i.e.

- monitoring and assessing learning as you teach, so giving constructive feedback to support students as they learn
- making appropriate use of a range of assessment strategies to evaluate students' progress towards planned learning objectives and using this to inform future planning and teaching so that learners' needs are met
- involving students in reflecting on and evaluating their learning and informing them of how to improve

Assessment of Learning (Summative) is carried out at the end of a unit or key stage to make judgements about a student's performance in relation to national standards. A student's performance is described in relation to national standard using NC levels and GCSE grades.

Teachers should therefore maintain an up-to-date record in order to monitor learners' progress, which will inform any intervention necessary.

9. Marking and Feedback

- Regular marking should happen as recommended in the Assessment Policy
- Marking for improvement (constructive marking) should happen as recommended in the Assessment Policy
- Formal marking (e.g. end of key stage, internal exams and coursework) should be to national standards, an agreed mark scheme and moderated.
- Feedback should support and help identify any strategies required to take them forward in their learning

10. Recording

Assessments should be shared with the student and recorded:

- by students in their diary in the appropriate assessment section
- by teachers in their markbooks, traffic lighting key assessments (half termly approx) using expected levels and grades to monitor students' progress relative to their potential.

In addition it is expected that regular class and homework will be recorded systematically to provide evidence of the range of work, progress and attainment of a student over time.

All these records will then be used as a basis for reporting attainment and progress to parents.

11. Monitoring

Monitoring and evaluation will be carried out by:

- Annual summative review and discussion to formulate future priorities
- Line Management meetings and fortnightly briefing sheet
- Observations
- Work scrutiny
- Target setting analysis

Reviewed	Interim review date	Final Review date	Responsible
November 2014	November 2015	November 2016	T Smith