Claverham Community College

Teaching and Learning Policy

February 2018

Approved: M.Whitehead – Chair of Governors'

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Table of Contents

Introduction

This policy has been updated following discussion with staff during the autumn, spring and summer terms 2016/17.

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 Teaching & Learning 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 five key principles for all learners are based upon:

- Challenge and Engagement
- Explanation, Modelling and Exploration
- Participation and Practice
- Questioning and Thinking
- Dialogue and Feedback

1. Challenge and Engagement

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.

Challenge – is the provision of demanding work which causes students to think deeply and engage in healthy struggle (the optimum being 'the struggle zone' – high challenge, low stress). Teachers and students must foster a growth mind set (failure is an opportunity to grow) not a fixed mindset (failure is the limit of my abilities).

2. Explanation, Modelling and Exploration

Learners acquire new knowledge and skills. Learners are confident to try new things and learn from errors and misconceptions improving prior knowledge and skills as well as exploring new concepts and skills that they can then transfer to other areas and subjects. Students will be able to apply new knowledge and skills across all their learning.

Explanation is the framing of information in such a way that students are able to secure and interpret new knowledge.

Modelling is the guiding of students through each stage of a task and explaining the rationale of each stage, prior to a student's independent attempt (Exploration).

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3. **Participation and Practice**

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

Practice – requires students to develop fluency and expertise by recalling previous knowledge and applying it to new scenarios.

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.

4. **Questioning and 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.

Questioning is the process of interrogating a student on a particular issue to ascertain whether or not the student has the requisite knowledge of, and / or for understanding, that issue. Teachers should allow students time to process the question and formulate a response. Teachers should check that all students understand and not base class understanding on the response of one student.

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.

5. **Dialogue and Feedback**

Feedback is the provision of information, by a teacher or peer, with respect to a students' performance or understanding.

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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 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 etc.

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.

3. Department Schemes of Work

These should include:

- national guidelines (End of NC KS3 statements, KS4 SOW will directly reference exam specifications)
- long term plans providing a brief overall map of what is to be taught by each year group each year
- medium term plans providing the structure within which teachers can carry out short term planning
- how students' learning will be assessed; both formative and summative, and the schedule for the assessments, marking and feedback to take place
- Summative assessment of each unit of work or topic every half term or 6 weeks
- Formative marking clearly showing student strengths, possible improvements and a student response to teacher feedback (this should also include marking for literacy)
- allowance for progression and provide challenge
- signposted opportunities for Literacy, Numeracy, ICT, Key Skills, SMSC, Thinking Skills etc
- a variety of approaches and learning styles for all activities including class and homework
- differentiation
- homework

4. Planning Lessons

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:

- embed processes, procedures and routines into every lesson to ensure learning starts promptly and effectively

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- 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
- plan individual lessons and sequence of lessons showing how students' learning will be assessed
- set challenging learning objectives which are relevant to all students
- provide evidence of progression and reinforcement in the work
- use well organised and accessible resources and visual aids
- ensure good use of homework time, with a similar variety of style and challenge as in classwork
- ensure 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 and which is delivered at an appropriate pace. Homework can be set at any point.

The recommended approach for the structured lesson consists of the integration of the key principles above. Although some clearly link to specific sections of a lesson, many are integral to all aspects of the lesson. Below we have identified some areas where the key principles are fundamental for effective learning to take place:

1. **Creating the Climate for learning** (**Challenge, questioning, feedback**) 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. Teachers should establish clear routines for welcoming and starting a lesson.

2. **Starter/Introduction**; teachers will plan learning activities that will be completed on arrival to the lesson and be of an appropriate level of challenge to engage and motivate the students.

Teaching and Learning Policy 2018- CCC

This may be:

- a strategy to share with the students what they will learn and how it builds on previous knowledge and learning
- an 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

At the start of every lesson the learning objectives and outcomes will be 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 (Explanation, Exploration, Questioning, Challenge, Practice); 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. Mini-Plenaries (**Feedback, Explanation, Exploration, Questioning, Challenge, Practice);** times that are planned at key points in learning to monitor and assess learning has taken place and assess progress towards outcomes.

5. Plenary (Feedback, Explanation, Questioning, Challenge); 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

In its simplest form, every lesson should contain the following key principles:

Expert teaching requires …
Challenge So that … Students have high expectations of what they can achieve.
Explanation and Modelling So that … Students acquire new knowledge and skills. Students know how to apply new knowledge and skills.
Practice So that … Students engage in deliberate practice.
Questioning So that … Students are made to think hard with breadth, depth and accuracy.
Feedback So that … Students think about and further develop their knowledge and skills.

Checklist to reflect on your own teaching. Do I?

- provide a learning environment that is positive and conducive to learning - tidy room, updated visual display, risk free environment, create positive components of self-esteem (belonging, aspiration, safety, identity, challenge and success)
- 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 use pace to move pupils' learning on at pertinent times
- promote active and independent learning that enables students to think for themselves and plan to manage their own learning, so that they extend and maximise 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 and disadvantaged students, those working below age related expectations, those failing to achieve their potential, and those experiencing behavioural and social difficulties
- establish high expectations so that all learners have the opportunity to make good progress
- include opportunities to develop numeracy and literacy and ICT appropriately

Teaching and Learning Policy 2018- CCC

- use a variety of teaching methods, type of activity and resources so as to engage and extend learners
- use every behaviour management strategy possible to prevent misbehaviour as well as respond to and manage misbehaviour according to the College Behaviour Management Policy
- use rewards both in and out of lessons.

Effective high-quality learning is when …
Challenge So that … Students have high expectations of what they can achieve.
Explanation and Modelling So that … Students are confident to tackle new knowledge and skills. Students will know how to apply new knowledge and skills.
Practice So that … Students willingly engage in deliberate practice.
Questioning So that … Students think hard with breadth, depth and accuracy to teacher questions. They are confident to ask questions if unsure.
Feedback So that … Students think about and further develop their understanding, knowledge and skills. Students know where they are and what they have to do to improve.

7. Learning

In its simplest form, every student should experience and learn from the key principles in each lesson as outlined above.

8. 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

9. 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 to make judgements about a student's performance. Every student in a year group should complete the same end of unit test / assessed work at the same assessment point. End of unit assessments can be differentiated for all abilities. A student's performance is graded on a 9 to 1 scale in all Years. The 9 to 1 scales in Years 7-8 are based on subject levelled criteria. In Y9 this continues in all subjects except English, mathematics, science, modern languages and RS where GCSE courses start; these are graded with 9 to 1 GCSE grades. In years 10 and 11 all subjects grade using 9 to 1 GCSE grades. Teachers must maintain an up-to-date record in order to monitor learners' progress, which will inform any intervention necessary.

10. Marking and Feedback

- Regular marking should happen as stated in the Assessment and Marking Policy
- Marking for improvement should happen as stated in the Assessment and Marking Policy
- Quality teacher marking (e.g. end of unit SIR marking, 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.
- Opportunities for Peer and self-assessment should happen as stated in the Assessment and Marking Policy.

11. Recording

Assessments should be shared with the student and recorded:

- by students in their diary in the appropriate assessment section

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- by teachers in their departmental markbooks (SIMs / Google Docs), traffic lighting key assessments as per the College assessments using the grade ranges to monitor students' progress relative to their potential.

In addition it is expected that class and homework grades 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.

12. Monitoring

Monitoring and evaluation of T&L will be carried out by:

- Annual summative review and discussion to formulate future priorities
- Line Management meetings
- Observations
- Work scrutiny
- Department Reviews
- Target setting analysis

Reviewed	Interim review date	Final Review date	Responsible
February 2018	June 2018	July 2018	T Smith/S Wright