

Court Fields School

Achieve | Belong | Participate



Teaching and Learning Policy

February 2024

Due for Review: Spring Term 2025

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1. Introductory Statement

This policy is to cover all aspects of teaching and learning and professional development and underpins the school wide approach to literacy, numeracy, metacognition, homework, assessment and feedback. Each strand mentioned is covered in more detail as an appendix policy, however all strands contribute to high quality learning and are governed by this policy. This brings clarity and simplicity for teachers, students and senior leaders.

The teaching and learning policy runs alongside the **curriculum policy**. In this sense, the **curriculum policy** outlines the school's intent (the what) and the **teaching and learning policy** governs implementation (the how). Pedagogy employed by teachers under this policy has been adapted to best suit the curriculum intent and coverage as identified by curriculum experts.

2. The Court Fields Philosophy for High-Quality Education

Teaching and learning at Court Fields is built on the following philosophy, and this underpins all aspects of planning, delivery and CPD.

Learning does not happen unless students feel safe and secure, have positive, trusting relationships with the adults around them and perceive these adults as being fair. Ensuring students have the emotional security to learn effectively will always come first in our school. We subscribe to six pedagogical principles which are based on our own critical engagement with research and evidence, but which have been tried and tested in our school, by our teachers and for our children. Each of these principles is underpinned by what we know about the cognitive process of learning and by a focus on ensuring our students become **metacognitive** learners. Our principles are that **challenge** is at the heart of every lesson for every student, all lessons are characterised by high quality **explanation** and **modelling**, students are supported to **practise** until they become independent, and **feedback** and **questioning** are used strategically to ensure excellence in both learning, planning and delivery. We do not dictate how these principles are applied; our teachers are specialists in their field who know and understand the children they teach. We know that they are the best people to adapt these shared principles to the delivery of their subjects and as a school we support them in continually improving both their practice and their subject expertise so that our students get the best learning experience in every lesson.

Our teachers are subject experts, and as such are best placed to adapt these principles to the needs of the subjects they teach, employing subject specific pedagogy to ensure that each component of knowledge in their curriculum is delivered in the most effective manner to enable students to know and remember more.

3. Principles of High-Quality Learning

Our principles of high-quality learning are taken from our engagement with cognitive science, evidence and wider research. These principles are the ones which have been shown, through our ongoing action research, to lead to rapid acquisition of knowledge and positive progress in our school, for our students.

All lessons are built on the use of these principles. Subject specialists will adapt and perfect the use of the principles for the delivery of their subjects and the students they teach.

- Challenge
- Explanation
- Modelling
- Practise
- Questioning
- Feedback

The schools CPL programme will focus on ensuring the expertise of all staff in using these principles in lessons and suiting them to their subject and curriculum intent. Best practise is shared regularly through professional development meetings, through the schools coaching program and within faculty planning meetings to ensure they are applied consistently within subjects in a way which best supports the demands of each subject and delivery of subject specific knowledge.

Planning and quality assurance of lessons will focus on the principles of High-Quality Learning and subject specific pedagogy to ensure consistently high-quality teaching and learning in all lessons.

4. Links with other Policies

This policy is designed to run alongside the curriculum policy, behaviour for learning policy and safeguarding policy. It underpins the additional teaching and learning policy appendices below.

Other linked policies include:

- Reporting Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Careers Education Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

All staff are responsible for ensuring their Safeguarding training is up to date and alerting their line manager if it is not.

5. Appendices

The following policy appendices are governed by the overarching philosophy of High-Quality Education and principles for High-Quality Learning. The following elements of teaching and learning all contribute to the High-Quality Education of students and so sit under this policy.

- Planning
- Homework
- Feedback and Assessment
- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Continued Professional Learning (CPL)
- Professional Development

Each element of teaching and learning as set out in the appendices, along with the main teaching and learning policy, are monitored through the school quality assurance programme which includes but is not limited to learning walks, lesson drop ins, work scrutiny, student, staff and parent voice.

Appendix 1. Planning

The curriculum is planned to ensure students build knowledge at the component level on prior learning. Knowledge is sequenced, spaced and interleaved to ensure retention of knowledge across the five years and is planned in a manner which recognises the demands placed on students working memory and reduces cognitive overload.

Faculty curricula and schemes of learning set out the key knowledge and skills and the links and sequences to building knowledge for each subject area. Each scheme of learning identifies opportunities for the implementation of the Principles of High-Quality Education. For further detail on curriculum planning please refer to the **curriculum policy**.

Teachers plan lessons which consider the key knowledge, skills and sequences as set out in the curriculum. Teachers use their knowledge of the principles of High-Quality Learning, professional development feedback and faculty planning discussions to ensure that this knowledge and these skills are retained by students in the long term and that progress is rapid.

A lesson planning pro forma which considers the school philosophy and principles for High-Quality Learning is available for staff to use. Staff are not expected to use this pro forma for every lesson, however teachers must plan the learning and consider the most appropriate pedagogy in every lesson. This could be in the form of an annotated scheme of learning, a different lesson planning template or in another way suited to the teacher, class and subject. Resources such as PPT are not evidence of lesson planning.

Class Profiles

Class profiles are used to ensure planning is focussed on students and groups of students. A typical class profile will identify the class seating plan and be annotated to show strategies used to ensure all students are learning and remembering the curriculum. It should also contain information about faculty and school wide strategies to improve the progress of Elevate, PP and FSM students and information about strategies to meet the needs of students with SEN. A class profile is a working

document which teachers will refer to when planning lessons and sequences of lessons. Therefore, there is no set format for class-profiles, and these may be in the form which best suits the teacher and may be physical or electronic documents. Class profiles do contain sensitive and personal information about students and should be kept safe according to GDPR regulations and the school **ICT policy**.

Appendix 2. Homework

Homework encourages independence and self-regulation. In Key Stage 3, homework is used to enable students to build the skills in revision, retention and recall of information, which they will need to be effective learners in Key Stage 4. The following guidelines to homework apply to all subjects:

- Homework must be meaningful and planned alongside the learning in class, following the same principles
- Homework should be set weekly for all subjects
- Homework must be shared on Class Charts
- Homework must have a reasonable deadline, ideally one week, to allow families to plan for support
- Where homework is in the form of an ongoing project, mini deadlines must be set to monitor progress
- Effort and attainment in homework should be celebrated using achievement points
- Alongside subject homework, all students are expected to read independently regularly. The following is an approximate guide to timings:
 - Year 7 20 minutes per subject week (up to 60 minutes per night)
 - Year 8 30 minutes per subject per week (up to 90 minutes per night)
 - Year 9 30 minutes per subject per week (up to 90 minutes per night)
 - Year 10 and Year 11 50 minutes per subject per week (up to 2 hours per night)

Appendix 3. Feedback, Marking and Assessment

- **Feedback and formative assessment** refer to any activity in which a student is given direction on how to improve or correction. Feedback is vital in ensuring students are able to progress, misconceptions are identified and corrected and routes to greater depth of knowledge and understanding are clear. Feedback also enables teachers to gain insight into what students know and can remember to ensure that they adapt the learning in the short and medium term so that all students know and remember more. Feedback is one of our principles for High-Quality Learning, and most lessons will contain some form of feedback for students to act upon. This may include verbal feedback, whole class feedback, modelling of improvements, feedback from low stakes or retrieval quizzing or peer feedback. Students are taught to respond to feedback when it is received.

- **Marking** includes those activities which result in written comments on a student's work. This may include book marking or whole class feedback records. Marking ensures students have a record of how to improve work which can be used for revision purposes. Student work should be marked at least once every 6 hours of lesson time. Following marking, students are expected to respond. This could be by correcting the marked work, developing and improving work or undertaking another piece of work.
- **Formative Assessment** refers to any activity which provides the teacher with ongoing live assessment that allows the teacher to know what students have learnt and identifies any misconceptions that may need to be addressed.
- **Summative Assessment** refers to any activity which results in a grade, mark or level for a student. Assessment is important as it gives students a picture of where they are. Assessment should be combined with some form of feedback, for instance a written comment or a PLC, to enable students to identify the next steps in their learning.
- Formal and reported assessment will take place twice a year, with all formative and summative assessment to date used to provide assessment information for students and parents including a comment on what students need to do to improve their performance.
- All forms of feedback, marking and assessment will form the basis for future planning. Teachers will record what students can and cannot yet do and will plan lessons accordingly to deal with misconceptions and ensure progress.
- Faculties are free to identify the types of feedback, marking and assessment which are most suited to their subjects. Each faculty should have their own feedback and marking policy which considers the points above and gives a clear rationale for the types of feedback, marking and assessment used.

Appendix 4. Literacy

The term literacy refers to skills in reading, writing and oracy. Literacy skills are explicitly taught as part of the English curriculum; However, all subject teachers and tutors take responsibility for enabling students to use and develop these skills as part of their learning.

The English department:

Students coming into Year 7 undergo literacy baseline assessments in writing, grammar, oracy and reading. The data produced from these assessments is shared with all teachers and tutors (in the form of reading ages and RAG rated skills sheets). Teachers use this data to plan effectively for the literacy development of all students in their class or tutor group.

The English curriculum is precisely planned to ensure that students build on their literacy knowledge and skills from KS2 and are exposed to a rich variety of reading, writing and oracy experiences. Vocabulary acquisition underpins all English lessons and lessons across the curriculum to ensure that students are able to manipulate language for a variety of purposes and in a variety of settings.

Shared Reading

All Key Stage 3 students read a novel together in their tutor group at least once a week. Shared reading has been chosen over independent reading as shared reading is proven to be more effective for readers who are behind their peers and shared reading gives tutors the opportunity to address misconceptions. The texts chosen for shared reading have reading ages which range from slightly below to slightly above the chronological age of the Year group in order to ensure a mixture of challenge and achievement for all students. Texts are also chosen as they address issues being addressed in the PSCE curriculum for that Year group. Tutors use this as an opportunity to build discussion and other oracy activities into shared reading sessions.

The principles of shared reading are also used across the curriculum to embed skills in research, reading for meaning and critique. Each faculty will develop their own, disciplinary model for reading to enable students to use their reading skills to enhance progress in that subject.

Writing Across the Curriculum

Each curriculum area has developed their own, disciplinary approach to writing, based on our knowledge of metacognition and the requirements of the subject. Each disciplinary approach to writing incorporates explicit instruction on text purpose and convention, structuring and organising writing, use of tier 2 and 3 vocabulary and grammatical accuracy.

Teachers will use a range of strategies in explicit instruction for writing, including modelling, scaffolding such as writing frames and sentence stems and exemplar materials.

Oracy

All students in Years 7 – 10 are given a baseline assessment in oracy termly as part of the English curriculum. Teachers of all subjects include oracy instruction in their lessons and use oracy as a means for learning. Our approach to oracy is built on the understanding that students must learn to talk as well as talk to learn. Teachers model high quality talk and the use of tier 2 and 3 vocabulary in their lessons to ensure students are exposed to a rich variety of talk types.

Appendix 5. Numeracy

The term numeracy refers to “a proficiency, which involves confidence and competence with numbers and measures. It is more than an ability to do basic arithmetic requiring an understanding of the number system, a range of mathematical techniques and an inclination and ability to solve quantitative or spatial problems in a range of contexts. It demands an understanding of the ways in which data are gathered by counting and measuring, and presented in graphs, diagrams, charts and tables”. (National Numeracy Strategy)

The Maths Department

The Maths department take responsibility for providing students with the knowledge skills and understanding they need to access all areas of the school curriculum in relation to numeracy with confidence. The mathematics curriculum is precisely planned to ensure that students build on their literacy knowledge and skills from KS2 and achieve mastery in each area of mathematical study. Students in mathematics follow a cyclical curriculum model which builds on prior learning each year.

Numeracy Across the Curriculum

It is the responsibility of all teachers to explicitly teach mathematics skills as used within their subject and disciplinary specialisms. The curricula in maths, science, humanities, ICT and DT have been created to enable students to build on their learning in mathematics and apply it across a range of subjects. Explicit cross-curricula references are made when teaching numeracy.

Appendix 6. Continued Professional Learning (CPL)

As a school, we have invested heavily in the development of our staff and have supported research and professional development of staff through work with outside individuals and agencies. Going forward, we strongly believe that we have the expertise within the school and the Trust to drive the improvement of teaching and learning. The majority of our continued professional development is therefore delivered on a peer to peer basis and focuses on best practise for our children and our school community.

Incremental Coaching

Each member of staff has been allocated a coaching partner to support them in their professional development. Coaching and the areas identified for coaching support are underpinned by self assessment using the CFS model and through discussion with line managers as part of professional development. Incremental coaching is a formative exercise used to enable staff to learn and develop as practitioners in their knowledge of pedagogy, curriculum design, behaviour management and leadership. Incremental coaching will not be used to form judgements or manage performance.

Workshops

Regular CPL workshops are delivered on various practical strategies designed to support implementation of the principles for high quality learning. Workshop attendance is identified through faculty improvement and professional development objectives and is followed by faculty planning time to ensure consistent application of strategies.

Working Parties

Working Parties are an opportunity for groups of staff to work together on an area of school improvement to lead change across the school. Working parties are led by key staff who have undertaken research and action research in their specific areas. All staff will have the opportunity to

work within each working party throughout thy year in order to contribute to the direction of whole school teaching and learning development.

National Project Qualification

There are annual opportunities for staff to undertake National Project Qualifications to support leadership development.

Internal, External and Trust CPL for all staff

In order to be reactive to school improvement planning, self evaluation and national and local priorities, throughout the year the school or trust may identify a need or area for whole staff development. This will be provided through internal, trust or external providers. Any CPL put in place for all staff will be subject to a robust quality assurance program and will be proceeded by follow up workshops, coaching and quality assurance to ensure high quality implementation and the impact of any such training.

Appendix 7. Professional Development

Our professional development framework starts with the assumption that all our teachers consistently meet the teachers' standards. Professional development, therefore, is a tool to ensure our teachers can move beyond the teachers' standards to become highly skilled practitioners and is not an accountability tool.

In the event that a teacher is identified as not meeting the teachers' standards, support will be put in place following the process set out in the Trust Teacher Appraisal Policy.

Staff self-assessment

The professional development cycle begins with a self-assessment survey, which allows teachers to reflect on their current practice and the areas of pedagogical practice they wish to develop. This is then discussed with line managers in conjunction with the faculty, curriculum and school improvement plans to identify individual development targets. These may include but are not limited to:

- Developing understanding of cognitive science, pedagogy and the principles for High Quality Learning
- Developing curriculum knowledge and design expertise
- Developing leadership and whole school expertise
- Developing expertise in managing behaviour and driving cultural change

Professional Development Evidence

Staff are responsible for collecting evidence of their own professional development and its impact on the development of teaching and learning on a subject, faculty or whole school basis. Evidence should be recorded regularly and especially following CPL workshops, working party meetings and any external courses. Evidence may also include notes from reading, online webinar-based learning or membership of external bodies or teaching and learning discussion/research groups.