



DORMSTON SCHOOL

Teaching & Learning Policy

The Dormston School aims to provide the highest quality education, maintaining a disciplined, caring environment in which teachers can teach and pupils can learn.

Teachers make the education of their pupils their first concern, and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills as teachers up-to-date and are self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with parents in the best interests of their pupils.

This Teaching & Learning policy aims to:

- Ensure that pupils receive the highest possible standard of education
- Ensure that monitoring of teaching and learning is effective and constructive
- Ensure that CPD is tailored to meet individual needs as identified by the monitoring process

Our Teaching & Learning Policy rests on a set of shared values that teachers should:

- Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils
- Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils
- Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge
- Plan and teach well-structured lessons
- Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils
- Make accurate and productive use of assessment
- Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment
- Fulfil wider professional responsibilities

We believe that all teaching should be of a high quality leading to each learner making significant and rapid progress academically, socially and emotionally and in relation to any other specific need or individual target. This is achieved by:

Assessment

- to prepare students for GCSE;
- to promote confidence that students can achieve their targets;
- to ensure assessment objectives (graded where possible) are shared explicitly with learners;
- to promote assessment objectives which recognise the full range of achievements and skills of a student within the context of their learning;
- to ensure the standards expected and success criteria are known by learners;
- to involve pupils regularly in formal and informal self-assessment;
- to ensure feedback to pupils is positive and comments are directed at securing pupils' agreement to next steps;
- to encourage teachers and pupils to reflect on assessment information and what it means for them?

Ongoing Assessment

Continuous assessment of pupils' performance and attainment should be made. Questioning and marking should support your professional opinion of each pupil's current performance.

- teachers give students clear success criteria which are related to learning outcomes;
- students know the learning objectives and success criteria and are able to use them to monitor their own achievement. They also know why they are learning;
- teachers regularly model what good learning should look like;
- teachers may make use of exemplar work that illustrates work in progress as well as the finished product;
- teachers regularly identify the next steps for groups and individuals as appropriate;
- learning outcomes are used as the basis for levelled questioning and feedback;
- effective questioning is a key feature of lessons and is used by the teacher to assess student understanding. Levelled questions (Blooms) are targeted for students in the class;
- teachers give time for students to answer questions, and use strategies to explore and develop the thinking of individual pupils. Basketball questioning is encouraged;
- teachers give students clear opportunities to talk about what they have learned and what they have found difficult, using the learning outcomes as a focus;
- students are involved in the process of peer and self-assessment;
- teacher feedback is constructive and identifies what the student has done well, what needs to be done to improve and how to do it;
- support staff are used to provide feedback to the class teacher about the appropriateness of learning activities and resources for individual pupils.

Target Grades

Each pupil is given an aspirational target grade for each subject. These should be shared with pupils. Pupils should also be made aware of how they are performing in relation to these targets and what they should do to improve.

Formal Assessments

Pupils should sit a series of formal assessments throughout the academic year. These formal assessments should mirror the requirements of each subject's GCSE examinations. These should be organised within departments and data should be used to track pupil performance and target intervention.

All pupils in Year 7-10 will also sit an examination in the June Exam Week.

Where possible, command words and formats of exams lower down the school should mirror those of each department's GCSE examinations to familiarise pupils with key terminology. In the 2 weeks prior to Exam Week all homework should be revision based. Guidance should be given to pupils on what they should revise.

Reporting

Throughout an academic year the following reports will be generated and sent home to parents:

- 2 interim reports, tracking student effort, and current level achieved/predicted final level/grade;
- 1 full written report for each subject studied in year 7, 9 and 11.

Subject teachers will be required to enter 1234 effort judgements and current/predicted progress levels each term into the school tracking system for each student they teach.

The written report in Years 7, 9 & 11

- each subject area is required to provide, for each student, an annual school report on progress made throughout the academic year;
- prior to completing reports, subject teachers will be required to enter examination/progress data onto the school tracking system and make alterations to 1234 judgements on effort if deemed necessary;
- reports should be personalised, and detail the student's performance throughout the year as well as giving specific targets for improvement;
- Form tutors will also be required to complete a pastoral report for their tutor.

Behaviour Management

Preventing Bad Behaviour

- greet them warmly at the door, welcome them, and look into their eyes;
- own the room. Teach from different bits of it. Pupils sit where you tell them to;
- be confident, enthusiastic and interesting;
- use a variety of activities;
- always get quiet before you have anything important to say;
- don't talk too much. Make your instructions simple and clear;
- never turn your back on the class.

Dealing with Bad Behaviour

- try the "look" first, then the "move", before you say anything;

- tell pupils they have a choice, but also tell them what the consequences are;
- apply any sanctions fairly and consistently – referrals, detentions etc.;
- focus on the behaviour, not the pupil;
- stay calm; seek help from colleagues in department or Pastoral Managers if needed.

Few classroom management issues arise when pupils are properly engaged in the following way:

- the lesson has been well planned;
- learning outcomes are shared and understood;
- different strategies are used to reinforce and secure learning;
- resources and environment are sufficient and conducive to effective learning;
- achievement is recognised.

(Pedagogy and Practice, National Strategy materials)

Differentiation

Differentiation is most effective when it:

- it is informed by marking and assessment;
- is proactive, teachers assume that learners are different;
- is more qualitative than quantitative. Teachers adjust the nature of tasks, not the quantity;
- relies upon multiple approaches to content, process, and products;
- focuses upon students. Learning is "engaging, relevant and interesting";
- blends whole-class, group, and individual learning. There is a flow to student progress that is a synthesis of whole-class, group and individual learning experiences;
- is organic, simply meaning students and teachers are learning simultaneously.

Homework

The school regards homework as an important part of every pupil's educational experience. It should play a crucial role in the work of every department.

Careful thought should be given to the nature of the assignments set as homework. Tasks should vary but should be planned and purposeful. They should be accessible to all of the pupils concerned, not merely those fortunate enough to have a well-resourced home. Homework should enhance and accelerate learning. (Please refer to Homework policy for additional guidance)

Marking

Marking is a powerful and on-going diagnostic record of children's achievement feeding into future planning. It is one of our most effective ways of providing feedback to pupils about their progress. The Sutton Trust report 'Pupil Premium Toolkit' listed effective feedback as the highest impact action (adding eight months of learning per year).

Good marking

- informs planning for individuals, groups, classes and whole cohorts;
- is an extension of your teaching;

- means improved planning, challenge and progress;
- looks different in different subject areas but closing the loop, pupil involvement and response, as well as general housekeeping are always involved.

Closing the loop

Closing the loop is when a teacher identifies a weakness in a pupil's knowledge/skills and then puts in place a strategy to enable the pupil to improve. Strategies can include a follow up exercise where the pupil completes a task to improve their work, a dialogue between teacher and pupil discussing the weakness, a spelling correction or an extension question. Time must be allotted for pupils to respond to marking and close loops. Absent pupils should be highlighted and set feedback time separately (perhaps as homework). Staff should then check corrections and acknowledge/tick/stamp. Staff should keep a note of pupils' targets to enable them to plan future lessons effectively.

Housekeeping

Staff should have high expectations of presentation and effort as well as focussing on progress.

Housekeeping includes asking pupils to complete tasks, asking pupils to improve presentation - picking up on graffiti, underlining headings etc.

Literacy

Spelling, punctuation and grammar mistakes should be highlighted for correction.

Pupil Premium

Special attention should be paid to the work of PP pupils. This could be marking their books first, more thoroughly or with a greater amount of feedback. You may wish to highlight PP pupils' books in some way e.g. by placing a full stop after pupils' target levels on the front cover of their books.

SEN Pupils

Ensure that you are familiar with any SEN pupils' strategy sheets before marking their work. Certain targets may not be appropriate for SEN pupils e.g. Pupils with Dyspraxia should not be set targets to improve their presentation.

Frequency

Pupils books should be marked at least every 3 weeks (see your departmental policy).

Pupil Premium

Pupil Premium is additional government funding to provide extra support for disadvantaged pupils for the purpose of raising their attainment and closing the gap between them and their peers.

Who is eligible?

- pupils currently receiving free school meals;
- pupils who have been eligible for free school meals in the last six years (FSMEver6);

- pupils who have been looked after continuously for more than six months or are recently adopted and have left the care system. (CLA/adopted children if school are notified);
- children of parents in service.

Effective planning and consistently good teaching impacts more favourably on disadvantaged pupils.

- be aware of who your pupil premium pupils are and know them in your seating plan;
- think carefully about where you seat pupil premium pupils so that it is easier to:
- question pupils to assess their understanding;
- support them by peer tutoring in lessons – they will rise to the challenge!;
- differentiate work to meet the needs of all pupils. (Follow any strategy sheet for SEN/Behaviour support.);
- Provide effective feedback and insist that all pupils respond to it and close the loop;
- mark your pupil premium books first to keep them at the forefront of your focus
- set appropriate and purposeful homework;
- allow time for group based activities within your lesson;
- keep parents informed of progress/raise concerns with your Curriculum Leader
- reinforce the use of phonics;

Curriculum Leader Level

- be aware of the pupil premium group and monitor their progress closely through Teaching and Learning Monitoring and Data Collection. Your data reports should make reference to this group;
- identify pupils who are not making sufficient progress in your subject area and discuss with your Leadership Link so that additional 'interventions' can be put into place if required or resources provided (see funding guidance).
- consider 'grouping' and 'setting' carefully so that it has a positive impact and provides opportunity for all pupils to achieve;
- flag up Literacy/Numeracy concerns so that additional support can be introduced.
- flag up attendance/behaviour concerns with CL/FT then HoH;
- make Pupil Premium a regular item on departmental/link meetings.

SEN

Subject Teachers re: pupils with SEN

- use pupils' strategy sheets (staff-stuff to keep- LEARNING SUPPORT- strategy sheets) to help plan for pupils with SEN. See the SENCO if you need more information;
- direct Learning Support Assistants assigned to your class to support your teaching. LSAs will be better able to support if they know what questions they should be asking re the learning objectives;
- if LSAs are not directed they will support in line with the Support Policy which outlines a complimentary and separate role for the LSA to support pupils towards independence;
- consult the SENCO if a pupil with SEN is still not making progress or if you need help addressing their needs.

Form Teachers/Heads of House

- use pupils' strategy sheets (staff-stuff to keep- LEARNING SUPPORT- strategy sheets) to help you understand the pupils;
- keep the pupils' SEN in mind when dealing with referrals and parents/carers to help inform your approach;
- consult the SENCO if you need further advice.

The SENCO is available to advise and support colleagues through: supplying information; observations; discussions; helping with differentiation strategies; directing teachers to information/training; helping with appropriate resources; advising on directing an LSA.

Questioning

Questions are the most common form of interaction between teachers and pupils in whole-class lessons as well as in group and individual work. Questioning is a key method of altering the level of challenge provided and determining the progress made in lessons. It is an immediate way for the teacher to check the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

Effective questioning is closely linked to the learning objectives in the lesson. It is staged so that the level of challenge in the lesson increases as the lesson proceeds. Group and paired work can allow questions to be matched to the level of challenge needed to move different pupils forward.

Closed questions check pupils' knowledge and understanding. Open questions have more than one possible answer. A well-designed set of closed and open questions leads pupils from unsorted knowledge to organised understanding.

Monitoring of Teaching & Learning and CPD

SMT Link Managers and Curriculum Leaders will monitor T&L through a series of Observations, Learning Walks and Book/Work Scrutinies.

Observations are carried out at least three times in an academic year.

Staff are given 24 hours' notice prior to the observation. Usually the observation is carried out by the SMT Link Manager and the Curriculum Leader, however this may vary as other post holders within a department and members of SMT may also be part of the observation process.

Feedback following the observation is given by the Curriculum Leader either with or without the SMT Link Manager as soon as is practically possible.

In the event that the observation grade is deemed to be less than good, then there will be an offer of CPD (usually from one of our CPD Leaders) to assist that staff member to improve. In some cases the offer of a second observation (usually within two weeks of the initial observation) is made. Staff members are expected to take an active role in their own continuous professional development.

Learning Walks are carried out every half term.

Usually the Learning Walk is carried out by the SMT Link Manager and the Curriculum Leader however this may vary as other post holders within a department may also be part of the monitoring process or it may be of use for another member of staff to be involved to become familiar with the standard of marking expected at Dormston.

The principal focus is the quality of marking as laid down in the marking policy. We look specifically at regularity of marking, the quality of feedback from staff and whether pupils have responded to teacher feedback. We also look for marking that informs future planning (MIP) as well as literacy and numeracy opportunities in the work looked at.

Book/Work Scrutinies are carried out every half term.

Usually the Book/Work Scrutiny is carried out by the SMT Link Manager and the Curriculum Leader however this may vary as other post holders within a department may also be part of the monitoring process or it may be of use for another member of staff to be involved to become familiar with the overall quality of work completed by pupils at Dormston.

This exercise has a wider remit than Learning Walks and concentrates on aspects such as differentiation, challenge, progress, current achievement, evidence of extended writing, and the quality of homework set.

Following Learning Walks and Book Scrutinies, findings are presented by each SMT Link Manager at the weekly SMT meeting. Experiences are shared and findings are collated and summarised.

In the event that the Learning Walk or Book Scrutiny grade is deemed to be less than 'good' then there is an offer of CPD (usually from one of our CPD Leaders or our Lead Marker) to assist that staff member to improve. This may take the form of a CPD Booklet which concentrates on the aspect identified requiring improvement. Staff members are expected to take an active role in their own continuous professional development.

Other CPD requirements will be met by Dormston School's extensive CPD programme.

In summary, the school Teaching & Learning Policy aims to:

- Ensure that pupils receive the highest possible standard of education
- Ensure that monitoring of teaching and learning is effective and constructive
- Ensure that CPD is tailored to meet individual needs as identified by the monitoring process

Legislative Links

Education Act 1996

Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998

Education Act 2002

Education and Inspections Act 2006

School Information (England) Regulations 2008

Equality Act 2010

Schools (Specification and Disposal of Articles) Regulations 2012

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Observation pro-forma and criteria

Appendix 2 – Learning walk pro-forma and criteria

Appendix 3 – Book/Work scrutiny pro-forma and criteria

Appendix 4 – Lesson plan pro-forma

Appendix 5 – Example of CPD booklet

Responsible Officer – Mr S Carroll
Review Officer - Mr N Eveson
Link Governor – Mr G Craig
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