

# Learning and Teaching Policy

Approved by RET Board

Approved on July 2022

RET contact CEO

Revision due Every 2 years



## 1. Rationale

- a. The prime method of implementing our curriculum intent is through the taught curriculum delivered in lessons. Learning and teaching are therefore at the heart of what we aim to achieve and how we achieve it.
- b. The content of the curriculum is essential and has been carefully thought out, constructed and sequenced; it is regularly reviewed to ensure that it is diverse and inclusive and serves our students well.
- c. Although it is primarily delivered in subjects, with an emphasis on subject specific knowledge and skills, we also want students to benefit from the rich and diverse links between subjects and their commonalities too.
- d. The curriculum is implemented by how it is taught and experienced. We want students to remember what they have learnt, to build up webs of knowledge and to become increasingly able to understand and take control over their learning.
- e. Teaching should be planned using educational and cognitive research into how students learn best and to engage and interest students as well as to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- f. Effective Learning takes place when students:
  - Acquire or consolidate new knowledge or skills, develop ideas and increase their understanding
  - Apply intellectual, physical or creative effort in their work
  - Show an interest in their work, sustain concentration and thinking and develop the skills of independent thought and research
  - Understand what they are studying, why they are studying and how they can improve.
  - Are given the tools and strategies they need to be effective learners.
  - Some students may need tailored strategies e.g. to help them focus on learning.
  - Some students e.g. disadvantaged may need support to catch up.
- g. Effective Teaching will:
  - Be planned effectively and episodically, with long term, medium term and short-term goals
  - Use clear learning objectives that drive a lesson and suitable teaching strategies that encourage, engage and interest students
  - Challenge students to perform at or above their minimum target level
  - Promote high standards of behaviour
  - Use homework effectively to reinforce and extend what is learning in school
  - Promote equality of opportunity
  - Use assessment for learning to engage and motivate students at key, relevant points in the lesson

## 2. Policy

- a. In practice, most lessons will:
  1. Engage students through
    - Interesting and rigorous explanations and activities
    - Offering them regular opportunities to read high-quality texts
    - Clear explanations of curriculum content
  2. Include an opportunity for practice by
    - Including interleaving and retrieval practice as a “Do Now” Task
    - Ensuring a time for independent practice
    - Setting homework that prepares for learning or practises what has been learnt
  3. Assess what students know through
    - High-quality formative assessment and feedback, at key relevant points in the lesson
    - Skilful and targeted questioning

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4. Help students to reflect by ensuring that

- Over time lessons help students to understand how they learn, how to study and how to revise; they will enable them to become increasingly independent
- b. All lessons should follow these principles although the above is not a check list and not every lesson will have every feature. We do expect these principles to inform lesson planning and delivery as well as our conversations around teaching and learning.
- c. Lessons should be based on thorough recognised research and widely recognised good practice. Teachers will have the opportunity to explore research and develop good practice through our CPD programme. Teachers will be supported to develop their understanding of their subject (subject knowledge) and of how to teach their subject (subject pedagogical knowledge).
- d. Lessons should be engaging and interesting. Learning and getting better is inspiring in itself, and lessons are often hard work, but students should also enjoy coming to school and enjoy their learning. Keeping students engaged and enjoying their learning is a valid aim of lesson planning.

### 3. Practice

- a. The features described in section 2 above reference interleaving of topics and retrieval practice - systematic implementation of these principles has been shown to improve the memory of students and they should be a feature of most lessons.
- b. Our expectation is there is a “Do Now” task at the start of each lesson. This should usually, or often, be based on retrieval practice.
- c. Over their time in school, students to be able to use these features (and other) techniques increasingly independently so they can be diligent and resilient. Our expectation is that developing this in students should be an important aspect of the curriculum and planned into lessons over time.
- d. Effective formative assessment and feedback that is based on clear success criteria should be a feature of every lesson; typically this will occur in a lesson plenary or a number of mini-plenaries.
- e. Teachers should consider the principles behind cognitive load theory when planning lessons and remove extraneous information to make explanations clearer. Teachers should be able to explain their subject clearly as a subject expert and to anticipate common misconceptions in their subject, so that planning can aim to deal with these.
- f. Developing a love of reading and being exposed to a wide variety of high-quality texts is crucial to helping all students achieve well. In lessons, students should be exposed to a variety of high quality, subject-specific texts, be supported to develop comprehension strategies, and to read aloud.

### 4. Homework

- a. Homework makes a difference to student progress. Evidence shows that it is effective for preparation (sometimes called flipped learning) and for practice. Online solutions for homework can be very effective and reduce teacher workload and we encourage the appropriate use of these. They are not however a substitute for direct personalised feedback from teachers to students.
- b. The purpose of homework is to:
  - progress and consolidate learning
  - enrich the student’s classroom experience
  - encourage independent study
  - facilitate a love of learning
  - extend knowledge and understanding of subject
- c. Homework should be accessible to all students and the quality of the homework should not rely upon the personal resources available to the student.

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- d. Typically homework tasks will be planned as part of the lesson and broader scheme of work, but teachers are encouraged to set other appropriate short tasks that arise from activities and discussions in individual lessons.
- e. Assessment of homework provides important learning feedback to students as well as for teachers to inform further planning.

## 5. Long-Term and Medium-Term Planning

- a. Long Term Planning – Programmes of Study
  - 1. In each subject there will be a Key Stage overview of the sequence and content of units of work that is based on developing students' schema of knowledge within the subject and in relation to other parts of the curriculum.
  - 2. This Programme of Study will map the curriculum and examination requirement for the subject as well as any broader content and planned learning.
- b. Medium Term Planning- Schemes of Work
  - 1. Each unit of work will be developed as a Scheme of Work where the learning will be planned in individual or blocks of lessons using the policy principles above.
  - 2. Schemes of work will include appropriate the links to cross curricular work (e.g. literacy, oracy, numeracy, citizenship) and identify where prior learning is interleaved.
  - 3. Key assessment and homework tasks will be identified and the opportunities for students to practice retrieval and previously learned skills will be described

## 6. Links to Other Policies and Wider Communication

- a. This Learning and Teaching Policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies. In particular the Curriculum and Assessment Policies closely support it.
- b. Other documentation such as staff handbooks will support staff with implementing this and related policies.
- c. Clear parental communication about curriculum, learning and teaching, homework and assessment is a key pillar of our successful provision.