



HOE VALLEY SCHOOL

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

Person Responsible: Assistant Head Teacher
Date Adopted: September 2018
Date of last review: Autumn 2020
Date of next review: Autumn 2021

To be read in conjunction with the Feedback, CPD, Behaviour for Learning and Appraisals Policies

1. OVERVIEW

Challenging, relevant, exciting and personalised opportunities to learn are at the heart of all policies, procedures and practices at Hoe Valley School (HVS); ensuring all students leave school with the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes to work underpins our curriculum, our staffing and our vision.

We understand that the single most important factor in successful schools is the quality of learning taking place.

Therefore:

- There is a relentless focus on young people and their learning
- The adults in the school continue learning themselves (see CPD policy)
- Staff and students are encouraged to collaborate by learning with and from each other

2. VALUES UNDERPINNING LEARNING AT HVS

2.1 Challenging Learning

Learning always builds on, and does not repeat, prior learning. All learning is differentiated so that students are stretched and challenged. Higher attaining students are quickly identified, in line with the High Attainers Policy, in order to develop their talents in specific curriculum areas. Students are expected to take responsibility for their learning and we encourage them to seek challenge independently outside of the school day.

In addition all of our students access Google Classrooms for each of their subjects where they can use resources from lessons and work through independent extension activities to further challenge themselves.

By Year 9, all students are on the right GCSE pathway with a challenging academic range of subjects offered including triple Science, Latin and a choice of modern foreign languages. Our most able students take 10 GCSEs and follow the more challenging curriculum pathways (see curriculum policy).

We firmly believe that students learn best when ‘desirable difficulties’ exist in lessons and, in line with, this we are passionate about each student being challenged in their lessons and believe that while differentiation may be necessary for some students learning should never be made too easy. Each student should be challenged at their own level in order to make progress.

2.2 Relevant Learning

There is much in the media about the ‘UK skills gap’ and about the gap between the needs of employers and the skill set of school leavers and graduates. Hoe Valley School is committed to closing this gap and supporting our students to become ‘work ready’ and equipped with the key digital skills they may need for the future job market.

Teachers ensure lessons provide opportunities for students to learn and develop the following skills, with the support and guidance of our Head of Digital Skills and Communication.

1. Excellent communicator
2. Adaptable
3. Team Player
4. Persuasive
5. Creative
6. Digitally skilled

Our aim is for the ethos and culture of the School to be one where individuals flourish and grow in self-confidence so that they can dream big about their futures and excel in their individual talents. Our starting point is modelling these skills as a staff to our students. We believe that by demonstrating such behaviours is a strong motivator for children to follow suit and learn from their teachers. Lessons are planned with these skills in mind and opening talked about to develop further understanding of the importance and impact of these skills. Each skill is also unpicked and taught through assemblies from both Heads of Year and the Senior Leadership Team and rewarded by achievement points, postcards and phone calls home.

2.3 Exciting Learning

The most effective learning is when students are curious, excited to know more and demonstrate a thirst for knowledge. Classrooms require energy and a ‘buzz’ as well as a clear focus on what the new learning is and what success looks like. Clear and consistent routines underpin exciting and creative classrooms and there are clear expectations about how students enter and depart from lessons (see Behaviour for Learning Policy).

2.4 Personalised Learning

A personalised approach is crucial to ensure that students are able to access the curriculum and broaden their knowledge and skills. Our curriculum design and delivery is data driven and all lessons offer different pathways, through the use of red, amber and green tasks, to ensure students are provided work that is tailored to their needs. All teachers must ensure that all students are accessing an appropriate and tailored curriculum which challenges each student in their classroom by stretching the higher attainers and supporting those who find a subject or topic challenging.

2.3 Prep

Prep for years 7 & 8 - EBacc subjects only; 20 mins per subject per week. This should be self-quizzing, based on knowledge organisers to encourage students to retain key information. On the day the prep is due, teachers should set a low-stakes recall quiz based on the area students were set to learn.

Prep for years 9, 10 & 11 one hour per week per subject. This should be a combination of self-quizzing using knowledge organisers, practice GCSE questions and whatever else is necessary within a teacher's specific subject area.

Year 11 Prep will be directed such that some weeks are dedicated to specific subjects for exam style questions and walking talking mocks.

- Teachers set prep at the beginning of the lesson and written into the Google Classroom which feeds into the student's Google Calendar
- Where appropriate, prep should be set in line with the red / amber / green system at the School
- Teachers set work which does not require the Prep teacher to deliver the learning. Students must work independently and quietly. If a student has no prep left to do or does not understand the prep, they must self quiz independently using one of their Knowledge Organisers
- Students are not allowed to listen to music during prep lessons and can will be directed by the Prep Teacher as to whether or not they should be using their Chromebook

To be read in conjunction with the Prep Policy.

3. THE AIMS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Exciting and inspiring teaching is the absolute priority of the School. The Assistant Head Teacher responsible for Teaching and Learning leads on this area, and reports into the Head Teacher. Quality and consistency of teaching is the key to raising standards and we therefore aim to ensure that every student has access to a high quality education which will allow them to achieve their full learning potential.

We are committed to ensuring the following:

- Teachers encourage students to develop as independent learners and make learning motivating, collaborative, rigorous and enjoyable
- Teachers at HVS are passionate and inquisitive learners themselves, constantly evaluating and sharing their professional practice and striving to achieve the aspirations that we have for our students. Teachers continuously refresh their subject knowledge and use current and appropriate teaching and learning initiatives. We have an open door policy which supports teachers to develop and hone their practice through regular drop ins by other members of staff.
- Teachers are open to feedback from a range of practitioners within and beyond HVS
- The HVS6 is evident in the vast majority of lessons and these ingredients will be explored via CPD and learning walks (see section 4)

- Teachers will always strive to deliver outstanding lessons. There are many different ways to achieve this and we do not believe in a 'one size fits all' approach. As skilful practitioners, our teaching staff cater for different learners, and use their judgement to employ the most appropriate techniques in their lessons to optimise learning. Lessons are well-planned, well-structured and well-paced, with clear and challenging learning objectives, which are shared with students and reviewed throughout the lesson
- Students are fully involved in their own learning and progress and are encouraged to develop the language to talk about their progress as well as the ability to understand how to be successful in a task.
- Monitoring, peer observations and learning walks help to ensure consistently excellent teaching. In addition, teachers and teaching assistants are held to account via the appraisals process

It is the responsibility of all adults at HVS to ensure students feel safe to take risks and learn effectively. The Behaviour for Learning policy outlines in detail the expectations of different groups of staff, students and parents.

4. CONSISTENCY AT HVS

Although we agree with the OFSTED framework that there is not a 'one size fits all' approach to learning, we also know that good routines and habits support excellent learning experiences. Consistency is key in achieving this. All teachers are expected to follow the 'Hoe Valley Six' when delivering lessons:

1. No learning time is wasted
2. All tasks are personalised (RAG)
3. Hands up' are avoided and instead teachers use 'think, pair, share', targeted questioning or other strategies to maximise participation levels
4. Literacy, numeracy, ICT and SMSC are embedded in the lesson and everybody in the room always speaks and writes in full sentences. All numbers in the lesson are 'used'
5. Learning always links to the 'big picture' and to real life by promoting the Work Ready skills
6. Students receive feedback in every lesson

There should be consistency in terms of feedback (see whole school and faculty feedback policy and the staff handbook) and in terms of how students' books should be set out. The 'Ready to Learn 4' and 'Ready to Leave 4' should be used in all lessons to ensure a consistent approach in preparing all students to learn.

5. QUALITY ASSURANCE

At Hoe Valley School we have confidence in our teachers and believe that every teacher is at least 'good'. As such, we do not feel that it is necessary to have a cumbersome quality assurance process. Additionally, teaching at Hoe Valley School is conducted in an open and reflective fashion. Each lesson is visited by a senior member of staff on 'walkabout' to enable teachers to feel supported in case of any issues arising and also enables SLT to accurately 'take the pulse' of

practice around the school. Each week during the SLT meeting there is time set aside to share findings from these 'walkabouts' to enable success to be celebrated as well as ensure any teachers who may require additional support receive it. This is all done in a supportive fashion with the aim being to enable HVS's teachers to deliver the best lessons they possibly can. Where excellent practice is seen the member of staff in question may be asked to contribute to whole staff CPD via the Thursday morning Golden Nugget sessions.

Heads of Faculty have initial responsibility for the formal quality assurance of the teaching in their faculty areas. Every member of staff is visited by their Head of Faculty on a regular basis. During these learning walk visits HoFs will identify areas of strength and areas for development in a teacher's practice in order to support them to develop and improve their teaching. These learning walks are recorded once per term on the BlueSky platform, on a 'best-fit' basis, to enable HoFs to analyse the practice across their faculty in order to tailor faculty meetings to the needs of the team. Additionally, the Assistant Head Teacher responsible for Teaching and Learning will be able to analyse practice across the school and look for patterns to inform the planning of whole-school CPD.

When a new teacher joins the School, the Head of Faculty must visit this teacher's lesson within two weeks of them being at HVS, and as a priority thereafter. These findings should be discussed in line management meetings to inform decisions relation to the teacher's probationary period.

Hoe Valley School is currently in the process of embedding coaching across the school. A coaching team has been trained and coaches are 'buddied up' with teachers who are new to the school or new to role. Coaches and coaches meet once a half term and follow the GROW model to develop a specific area of their practice. This is not reported upon via the appraisal process and is a way of supporting teachers to reflect upon and develop their practice in a safe, supportive environment. It is the ultimate vision that ever teacher at HVS will have a coach.

Where concerns are raised regarding teaching performance, Heads of Faculty, with guidance from the Assistant Head Teacher and the school's coaching team, will act as mentors or coaches as appropriate in the first instance to provide subject-specific guidance to help teachers improve their practice. In the case of this process not leading to significant improvement the Assistant Head Teacher will then place the teacher onto the Teaching and Learning Acceleration Programme (TLAP) in which they will be mentored by an outstanding practitioner who is not their line manager. This process is separate to the appraisals process and is overseen by the Assistant Head Teacher. If performance does not improve after this process, this will be addressed via the formal Appraisal process (see Pay Policy and Appraisal Policy).

The School's SIP partner also quality assures teaching and learning along with external visitors from outstanding local schools. This process allows the School to standardise the quality of feedback.

6. REPORTING ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

The Assistant Head Teacher responsible for Teaching and Learning ensures that all staff and the Board of Governors are briefed on the strengths and weaknesses of Teaching and Learning within the School each term. The quality of teaching and learning is also discussed at committee level with governors.

APPENDIX 1:

TLAP (Teaching and Learning Acceleration Programme)

Aims

To improve teaching by:

- identifying and building on the strengths of teachers
- identifying and meeting the developmental needs of teachers through tailored programmes
- sharing good and outstanding practice
- challenging and eradicating inadequate practice or practice that requires improvement

Referral

Staff will be placed on a TLAP if their performance is judged as requiring improvement or inadequate by drawing on a range of sources (lesson observations, learning walk letters, data trawls, student voice etc).

The TLAP will be run by an outstanding practitioner who will become their mentor through the process. They will not be the teacher's line manager. The teacher's line manager will be informed the TLAP is in place and what the outcome of the TLAP was.

The Programme

Each TLAP lasts approximately 6 weeks and will be tailored to meet individual needs by the mentor and teacher working together. TLAPs may include:

- Weekly non-graded developmental observations and feedback by the mentor, focusing on key areas of development e.g. personalization, home learning
- Observations of colleagues to model good and outstanding practice
- Shared planning meetings with an appropriate member of staff
- Direction to in-house or external CPD
- Support from external consultants or advisors
- Visits to relevant schools

Monitoring

At the end of the TLAP the teacher's performance will continue to be monitored through mechanisms selected to measure improvement. Such mechanisms may include:

- Pre-announced lesson observations
- No-notice typicality checks
- Work scrutiny
- Review of planning
- Looking at the achievement and progress of students

Outcomes

At the end of the TLAP a review meeting will be held between the teacher and the TLAP mentor. Three possible outcomes will be considered:

If....	Outcome
The teacher's performance has improved so that practice is now potentially good	No further action
The teacher's performance has improved but needs further support to become consistently good	Extended TLAP
The teacher's performance is unlikely to make the required improvement	Performance Review meeting with line manager

Record Sheet: To be completed collaboratively between teacher / mentor (can be shared with line manager if agreed with the teacher)

Week	Lesson observations	Discussion topics	Actions	Comments
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				