

ALAMEDA MIDDLE SCHOOL



INSPIRE • ACHIEVE • EXCEL

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

DOCUMENT STATUS

ORIGINAL AUTHOR	Louise Fox
DATE OF PRODUCTION	June 2019
CURRENT STATUS	Draft
REVIEWING BODY	Curriculum and Standards Committee – Senior Leadership team
REVIEWED ON	June 2019
DATE FOR NEXT REVIEW	June 2020
RELATED POLICIES (IF ANY)	Assessment Feedback and Marking (to be completed) Appraisal Restorative Practices Attendance Curriculum Use of IRIS Connect



TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DOCUMENT STATUS	I
TABLE OF CONTENTS	II
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. RATIONALE AND EXPECTATIONS	1
3. SELF-EVALUATION AND BEST PRACTICE	2
4. MONITORING THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING	3
5. MONITORING THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' WORK	4
6. CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	5
7. ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING	6
8. PUPIL GROUPING AND 'SETTING'	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
9. LESSON STRUCTURE AND DELIVERY	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.



1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this policy is to provide a single reference policy document for teaching and learning at Alameda Middle School.

We believe that pupils need a curriculum that prepares them for a rapidly changing world where technological innovation and society as a whole alter at a staggering rate.

2. RATIONALE AND EXPECTATIONS

Effective teaching and learning is the principal purpose of Alameda Middle School. It is at the heart of securing high quality educational provision. It underpins the successful provision of a broad and balanced curriculum, which meets the needs of all pupils. Alameda Middle School is fully committed to supporting pupils and teachers in effective teaching and learning; to promoting the enjoyment of learning; to securing progress and high standards of attainment for all.

Conditions for Effective Learning:

- Regular attendance
- High self esteem
- Constructive relationships with staff and other pupils
- High levels of motivation and enthusiasm
- High standards of behaviour.

Conditions for Effective Teaching:

- Commitment to improvement within the school and across departments
- In depth knowledge of pupils
- High quality professional development, including ICT, Numeracy and Literacy
- Co-operation and teamwork and opportunities for sharing best practice
- Motivated teachers
- Effective management of resources and Teaching Assistants.

Features of good teaching and learning:

- High levels of participation and engagement, encouraging a desire to learn
- A willingness to show initiative and responsibility for their own learning
- Concentration and application
- A willingness to both ask and answer questions with enthusiasm



TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

- Acquisition of new knowledge, skills and understanding
- The ability to reflect, evaluate and set targets for themselves
- Effective feedback.

It is expected that teachers will provide a challenging and stimulating curriculum and environment designed to encourage all children to reach the highest standards of achievement by demonstrating the following:

- Good subject knowledge and building on prior learning
- Enthusiasm for teaching and learning
- Effective planning and setting of clear learning objectives
- A variety of teaching strategies with a view to developing independent learning
- Use of assessment systems to inform teaching and planning
- Good pace and challenge to inspire pupils
- Knowledge and use of cross curricular ICT, Literacy and Numeracy as appropriate.
- Effective classroom management of pupil behaviour and use of praise.
- Effective methods of meeting individual needs

3. SELF-EVALUATION AND BEST PRACTICE

As a method of identifying professional development needs and areas of curriculum development, it is important that a school is self-evaluating. Continuing Professional Development must assist the improvement of present practices.

Broad Guidelines

- All staff should be involved in the sharing of best practice and be comfortable discussing it.
- All self-evaluation should be carried out within the aims and vision of the school.
- Monitoring and Evaluation of teaching and learning, the curriculum and professional development should be systematic, with feedback to staff.
- Schools should take full responsibility for their own improvement.

Implementation

- Middle and senior leaders should self-evaluate CPD on an annual basis.



TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

- The termly monitoring and evaluation of lessons and pupils' work by senior and middle leaders should feed directly into the CPD Plans for subject areas and the whole school.
- In the autumn term, there will be areas of individual CPD identified through the appraisal process as well as ongoing monitoring by senior and middle leaders. In the spring and summer terms ongoing monitoring by middle and senior leaders should continue to identify CPD for whole school and particular areas.
- On a regular cycle, the work of staff, Senior and middle leaders will be evaluated in the appropriate forums. Again, this will contribute to the CPD process and the completion of the SEF which though being a working document, will be formally reviewed in September each year.
- Senior leaders provide staff with guidance and support in terms of managing workload during this cycle of self-evaluation.

4. MONITORING THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

The monitoring and the impact of monitoring the quality of teaching and learning is a key element in maximising pupil progress and attainment. The subsequent evaluation of the monitoring process is vital for informing action planning for pupil needs, staff development and sharing best practice.

Aims:

- To ensure the highest standards of teaching and learning
- To maximise pupil progress and attainment
- To inform staff development through target setting and action planning
- To share good practice and ensure performance management is effective

Policy into Practice

Members of the senior leadership team complete "walkabouts" on at least a weekly basis, visiting lessons for approximately 10-15 minutes. During this time, pupils' work is looked at. The focus of these "walkabouts" is linked to the school development plan and is also informed by previous monitoring activities. A summary of walkabouts is shared at SLT meeting weekly. No notice is given for these walkabouts, they are part of everyday practice of leaders around school. Feedback is given via a short slip showing strengths and "I wonder if". In some cases, where more in depth discussion is required, this is done face to face.



TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

In order to provide a greater focus on teaching and learning over time, lesson observations are also carried out. These may involve senior leaders or middle leaders joining for part of the lesson, leaving and then returning later in the lesson, but overall, they will have been in the classroom for 20 minutes or more, also using evidence from pupils' books.

Support for teachers

- Observation of subject leaders, skilled teachers and their peers (paired teaching) within subject areas
- Relevant external or in-house training
- Work with an SLE or similar.

5. MONITORING THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' WORK

Both the senior and middle leaders will be engaged in the regular monitoring of pupils' work, either choosing a sample from a group or choosing a whole class for scrutiny. Constructive written or oral feedback from work scrutiny will be given to teachers and pupils, identifying any issues, offer of support as necessary and monitoring impact. Best practice should also be shared. Pupils' written work should follow the following criteria:

- Pupils complete all tasks effectively and pupils correct work where necessary.
- Pupils respond to feedback where required.
- Work is well organised and well-presented and books are kept tidy.
- Progress over time is visible and targets clearly set within the feedback.
- The quality of content, structure and handwriting improves over time.
- Subject Leaders will look for evidence of the development of new knowledge, skills, ideas and understanding; taking into account the context of current work in relation to pupils' previous learning and the ability of pupils.
- All subjects marking to support literacy.
- Pupils reflect on feedback through SIR

Sources of Evidence:

- Pupil participation in question and answer sessions.
- Pupil response to listening and reading tasks.
- Completion of written work in class and at home.
- Discussion with pupils of what they need to do to improve and attitudes to learning.
- Improving marks, Classroom Monitor tracking sheets, effort and attainment grades.



- Tracking of progress through PPM meetings.
- Pupil use of resources for independent learning.
- Visual evidence of progress reflected in the pride in their work.

6. CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Rationale

We set high standards of expectation for pupils. A natural extension is to strive for excellence as professionals. Professional Development will facilitate reflection, provide insight into our roles as educators, share best practice, and help us manage change.

Continuing Professional Development should link closely to the aims of the school and the School Improvement Plan. The process of professional development must be carried out within a climate of a 'learning environment' and must impact positively on pupil outcomes and contribute to raising standards.

Broad Guidelines

- All staff to have the right of access to CPD opportunities including national / school issues. Many of these opportunities will be coordinated by the local Teaching Schools and PSGs.
- Fair and transparent procedures for all staff.
- There should be an ethos of a 'learning environment', where we challenge our practice.
- Professional development should relate to the needs of the school, the subject area or the individual (relating to Performance Management).
- Professional Development should involve teaching skill development and the training for management and the delegation of responsibility.
- The Professional Development Co-ordinator should look widely for ideas and liaise with staff.
- Teachers to have opportunities to share and observe best practice, this will take place as ongoing development each term.
- The impact of Professional Development should be measured in terms of pupil outcomes or improved management practice.

Implementation

- Subject Leaders and the CPD coordinator should identify and cost whole-school needs.



TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

- All staff should have the opportunity to complete a request form following the setting of appraisal targets in September, relating to personal, department and school needs. Other applications for CPD will be considered as opportunities arise and need is identified.
- Staff should provide feedback to the appropriate audience after attending training and consider keeping a CPD portfolio.
- Professional Development across the school should be constantly monitored and evaluated.
- There should be creative thinking and use of expertise in providing 'in-house' training.
- Technology such as IRIS Connect should be used to facilitate professional development through self-reflection and coaching.

7. ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

Assessment for learning is seen as the foundation for good learning and teaching. It exists to help the teacher support each child. It ensures more effective teaching by providing the evidence for closer matching of tasks to the child's needs. It assists the children by providing them with an indication of what stage they are in of the learning process. It helps to inform future planning and teaching strategies. It helps us to recognise and move on from success.

For greater detail on the way we use this and other forms of assessment across the school see our feedback and marking policy.

8. PUPIL GROUPING AND "SETTING"

Pupils are entitled to experience:

- Teaching and learning which meets their needs;
- Equality of opportunity to experience personal success;
- High expectations combined with care and encouragement irrespective of their level of ability.

Alternative Pupil Groupings

There are a wide variety of ways of grouping pupils for the purposes of teaching and learning. To avoid misunderstandings a common set of definitions is required:

- *Class* - Pupils regularly taught together for a named course of study – a general term.



TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

- *All-ability Class* - Pupils taught together as a class, not constituted on the basis of their aptitudes or abilities. This is sometimes referred to as “mixed ability”.
- *Classroom Grouping* - The practice of the teacher allocating pupils within a class to small, short-term working groups for specific learning activities. ‘Assertive groups’ may or may not be ability groups. Their composition is normally varied from one occasion to another. Groups following the principals of Kagan co-operative learning will be grouped with pupils of differing levels of attainment seated together.
- *Set* - Pupils taught together as a class, constituted on the basis of their aptitudes and abilities in that subject.
- *Equivalent Sets* - Two or more sets of equal standing in a subject. The term “parallel sets” is sometimes used.
- *Band* - A subset of the year-group, identified on the basis of general (i.e. not subject-based) aptitudes or abilities.
- *Inherited Set* - Pupils taught in a class in one subject constituted on the basis of aptitudes and abilities in another subject.
- *Collaborative Set* - Pupils taught in the same set for different subjects. The set is constituted by pooling evidence of pupils’ aptitudes and abilities from the different departments.
- *Stream* - Pupils taught together as a single class across a wide range of subjects, on the basis of general aptitudes and abilities.

Roles, Responsibilities and Procedures

- **Teachers** assess pupils’ work and record outcomes in ways which both help pupils to improve and track progress against targets;
- **Subject Leaders** give guidance to their teams on assessment policy and procedures, determine common assessment tasks to be used across classes and maintain and analyse assessment information within their departments. They first populate draft set lists based on pupil attainment and targets. In consultation with teachers, draft lists are then refined. Any set movements during the year should be communicated to parents and the reasons evidenced.

In drawing up lists, Subject Leaders maintain a keen awareness of how expectations on the following groups of pupils are being shaped - boys, ethnic minority pupils, Disadvantaged, and pupils with special needs. Subject Leaders provide setting information for parents and are accountable to parents for setting decisions made. Subject leaders scrutinise pupil performance data on a ‘set by set’ basis in order to



TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

monitor and evaluate the effect on setting of the progress of pupils at all levels of ability, they are responsible to the Headteacher for keeping the setting policy of the school and its implementation across the curriculum under constant review.

Setting Policy - Assertions which underpin the policy

- Setting is inevitably about ranking and sorting pupils. The arguments generally advanced for and against setting are finely balanced. They involve a range of factors - academic, behavioural, social, statistical, pedagogical, regarding equality of opportunity. Personal opinions about setting are related to peoples' beliefs and values.
- Learning is best when it is interactive and multi-sensory and when the learner is presented with demanding, varied, attainable and relevant challenges. This applies to all types of classes. Setting may make 'personalisation' more manageable, but not of itself assure it.
- The setting approved by this policy must promote a culture of high expectation and equal opportunity. Equal opportunity is about recognising differences and then making provision which sensitively takes these into account in such a way that all pupils have a real chance to experience success.
- Progress in learning is not linear. Learning of individuals shows spurts and plateaux. Setting decisions based on differences at a particular time may advantage some and disadvantage others.
- Research evidence shows that organising classes by ability does not necessarily promote an overall rise in attainment across the ability range. Unless departments go into setting with a strong commitment to using it as a strategy in maximising the learning of pupils of all abilities, it will not accomplish its aim.

9. LESSON STRUCTURE AND DELIVERY

- Lesson will start promptly and end on time.
- High quality resources will have been prepared and organised in advance.
- The lesson will be linked to previous learning or teaching.
- Learning Objectives and Success Criteria will be shared and explained.
- Pupils will be exposed to a variety of different activities that address different learning styles and outcomes. These will have been carefully planned to add interest and enjoyment and to sustain concentration, engagement motivation and application.
- Teacher talk will be kept to a minimum and pupils will be actively involved in tasks.
- Pupils will experience individual, pair and small group work across a series of lessons.



TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

- Throughout our lessons pupils will be exposed to mini plenaries to address misconceptions check and develop understanding and assess learning.
- Time will be left at the end of a lesson to summarise and recap on learning that has taken place.

