



North Leamington School

TEACHING, LEARNING & ASSESSMENT POLICY

2018

Policy Name: Teaching, Learning & Assessment Policy

Policy Details

Date of Policy: September 2018

Date of next Review: September 2019

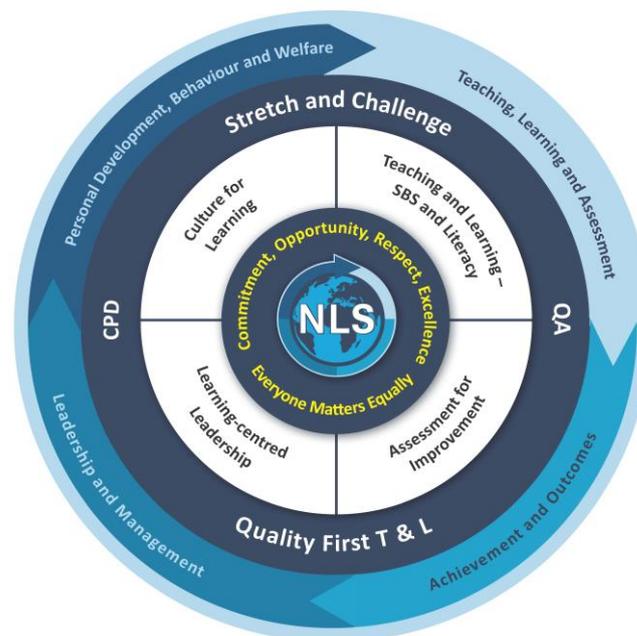
Background:

This policy offers an overview of principles, values and other central ideas shaping the key teaching, learning and assessment elements within North Leamington School.

In a wider, national context where there is an increasing sense that multiple approaches to students' classroom experience is valid, it remains important to define underlying principles and ideas in order to offer and ensure an element of guidance, shape and consistency.

Principles and ideas will be regularly reviewed according to emerging need and changing contexts, while practice will be assured through a rigorous Quality Assurance process.

The below feature in our strategic wheel: the outer strand represents the Ofsted parameters in which we operate; the circle within that highlights some of our key delivery mechanisms and principles; the four inner, white segments identify strategic priorities going forward and the heart of the wheel encapsulates our commitment to CORE and the comprehensive philosophy.



Commitment:

Through our Skills Beyond School (SBS) focus and in the wider delivery of the curriculum, we promote in all our students a commitment to their learning and to achieving success and excellence. We are acutely aware that commitment to daily classroom learning is vital for achieving success and excellence; and that this commitment comes about not only through the development of specific whole-school skills sets such as SBS or through the wider curriculum provision, but it is outstanding teaching & learning provision on a day-to-day, lesson-by-lesson basis which most effectively generates a passion for learning in students. This, in turn, perpetuates commitment to securing the best outcomes. This commitment to learning is seen in the wider context of learning beyond the classroom and beyond the more formal experiences offered to our students.

Opportunity:

Opportunity to experience regular outstanding teaching and learning is crucial to all students' success. It is complemented by a diverse curriculum provision designed to meet the personalised needs of the individual as well as that of the group. It is further enhanced by key teaching and learning guidelines such as that of co-construction: we aspire as an institution for ever-greater levels of opportunity for students driving their own learning within the classroom. Student Voice is also geared towards students having the opportunity to lead their own learning. Assessment is an opportunity which ties in with the provision of teaching and its associated learning.

Respect:

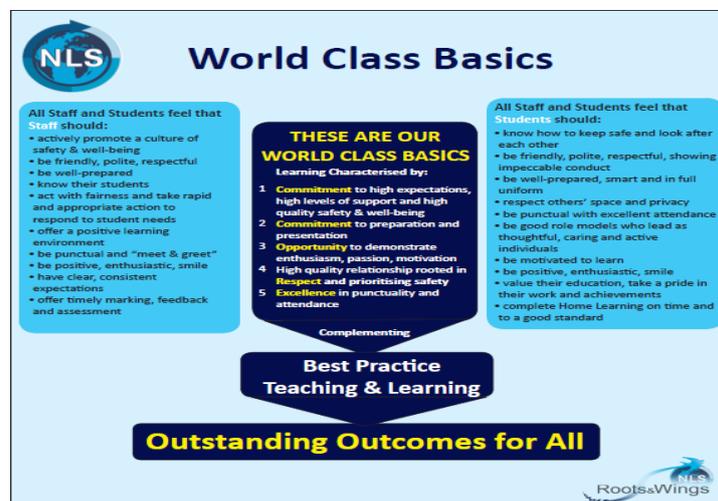
We believe that students who are actively engaged in the teaching and learning process will respect their own learning and that of others. A basic premise is that a learner who has been well-catered for with quality, personalised provision will respond with positive behavioural traits. As part of our SBS programme that is integrated into lessons, we engender in our learners (especially through the *reciprocal* strand) an understanding of the power of working as part of a team.

In addition to this idea of respectful attitudes towards learning and its *process*, we feel that respect is something which should form part of the *content* of daily teaching and learning. As such, opportunities to develop an understanding, tolerance and respect of others is key to our curricula: it is deeply embedded in our VT Curriculum and opportunities such as those related to International School status are a regular feature of cross-curricular student experience. We respect differences in our students and their personal experiences.

Excellence:

With all the above in mind, we believe that we will continue to achieve excellence as an institution and for its individuals. We consider excellence in terms of personalised progress: We are dedicated to diminishing differences through "*Stretch & Challenge for All*". We drive personal growth through asking the students to 'think hard' within their tasks, ensuring that the teacher has planned appropriate challenge.

Excellence derived from teaching, learning and associated assessment is defined in part from examination outcomes but is seen again, in a wider context: one in which students evidence, for example commitment to their learning and the respectfulness detailed above. Teachers help shape this drive for excellence through their planning, which takes account of the following: Group Profiles – detailing individual student needs – and Provision Mapping; a commitment to the World Class Basics – including books; stretch & challenge, as made apparent in the concept of The Learning Pit – which draws together cognitive skills such as Bloom's and wider ones concerning, for example, our Skills Beyond School.



Assessment

We believe that assessment and feedback should seek to enhance engagement and a **Commitment** to learning. Students should be committed to improving their learning based on quality feedback and assessment; there should be a range of **Opportunities** for students and teachers to be involved in the feedback process - for example, self assessment, peer assessment and teacher assessment. Protocols for assessment and feedback should have **Respect** at their heart – feedback should be relevant and personalised and care should be taken over the comments given and this is particularly the case when students are involved in assessing the learning of their peers. **Excellence** should be enhanced and rewarded through assessment and feedback. It should enable students to strive for their personal bests in an informed way.

1. Intended Outcomes

NLS's teaching, learning & assessment policy exists in order to **cause** the learning of all its students to happen. It is underpinned by the CORE values and vision:

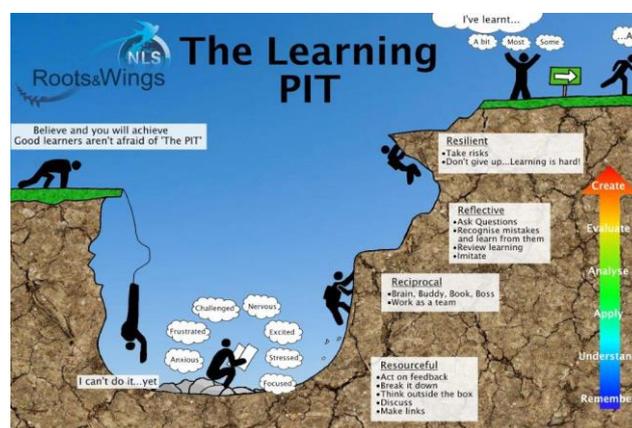
North Leamington School will continue to ensure a vibrant, ever-improving and outstanding learning community; one that offers fantastic opportunities to enthuse, engage and enrich the experiences of all its stakeholders. We will continue to engender a commitment to life-long learning in a very positive, dynamic and respectful environment; one that expects and supports personal excellence but in the context of dedication to the concept that "everyone matters equally".

2. Strategic Principles

Outstanding Teaching and Learning:

Specific practices in the classroom should be characterised by flexibility and personalisation but, as stated above, there are key hallmarks or teaching & learning principles that should guide and shape provision so that there is an element of consistency in practice, including:

1. A recognition of the needs of the individual as well as the group – so that differentiation is standard but that consistent personalisation (outstanding teaching & learning) is the aspiration.
2. A commitment to the development of ongoing, effective assessment through Feed-up, Feed-back, Feed-forward strategies.
3. Attention to the Diagnose-Therapy-Test (DTT) learning cycle linked closely to Personal Learning Checklists (PLCs)
4. The development of Academic Resilience through the Skills Beyond School (SBS) and Revision/ Metacognition development.
5. Provision for other whole-school foci such as Literacy and Numeracy and Home Learning (HL).
6. Clear attention to the concept of Stretch & Challenge for All.
7. A judicious balance of skills and knowledge – for example, in Bloom's Taxonomy.
8. The use of the Learning Pit metaphor – in which students deploy skills, knowledge and other personal qualities in order to address the learning challenges they experience.
9. A commitment to give opportunities to allow the students to 'think hard' through their tasks.
10. The use of Inter-leaving, spaced learning and Knowledge Organisers as a way of consolidating and securing knowledge.



While we believe that “Everyone Matters Equally”, we understand that to ensure an equality of opportunity we need to have some additional strategic priorities where we invest a little more in certain groups or with certain individuals. To this end, we have an ongoing focus on Key Groups including: **SEND students, disadvantaged students and boys** and those who fit into a combination of these categories, supporting narrowing the gap.

In order to help understanding of the distinction between good and outstanding practice, we have devised the following table: while it can be further unpacked, the key descriptor distinguishing the two is that Good learning is characterised by differentiation while Outstanding learning is characterised by personalisation.

Element	Good	Outstanding
General Provision	Differentiated – teacher directed and aimed at groups or “types” of student	Personalised – driven by the needs of the individual and increasingly directed by the student
Knowledge	Teachers use secure knowledge to plan learning that sustains pupil’s interest and challenges their thinking.	Teachers demonstrate deep knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach and which is introduced progressively
Questioning (of staff and students)	Teachers use questioning skilfully to probe pupils’ responses and reshape tasks and explanations.	Teachers use highly effective questioning and demonstrate understanding of the way students think about subject content.
Planning	Effective – with differentiation for students’ needs (see general provision above)	Very effective – with all students needs planned for and resources are co-ordinated well. (see general provision above)
Expectations	Teachers encourage all students to work with a positive attitude	Consistently high expectations are shared by students and staff and student efforts are clearly recognised
Stretch and Challenge	Teacher is developing challenge in the classroom. Students are given opportunities to “Think hard”.	Students love the challenge of learning, are curious and access opportunity to develop through the provision of extra-curricular activity Students are given “Thinking hard” strategies that are targeted and personalised.
Use of time	Time in the lesson is used productively	Maximum use is made of lesson time and there is time for practice the embedding of knowledge and skills
Literacy and Numeracy	Teacher is developing Literacy and Numeracy skills in line with NLS and where appropriate.	Teachers embed Literacy and Numeracy skills in line with NLS policies and where appropriate.
Reflection	Teachers give students sufficient time to review what they are learning and develop further. Students learn from mistakes.	Students are eager to improve and capitalise on feedback; mistakes are used as a learning opportunity
Assessment of, for and as Learning	Assessment is accurate and in line with feedback policy. Assessment informs the learning in the classroom	Teachers check pupil’s understanding (to identify common misconceptions) systematically and effectively in lessons, offering timely support that quickly moves the learning forward.
Home Learning	Homework is set, that consolidates learning, and prepares pupils for the work to come.	Challenging homework is set in line with the school’s policy, which consolidates learning, deepens understanding and prepares pupils very well for the work to come.
Feed-up, Feed-back, Feed-forward (Staff, parents/ carers and Students)	Teachers give pupils feedback in line with school’s policy. Pupils use feedback well and they know what they need to do to improve – this supports timely provision of information for parents	Incisive feedback is used in line with the school’s assessment policy – this supports timely provision of information for parents
Diagnosis, Therapy, Test	DTT strategies are used regularly to identify gaps in learning, and informed by assessment.	DTT strategies are used regularly and effectively to identify and address gaps in learning. Improvements are visible over time, with all key groups so targets are met.
Behaviour	Behaviour for learning is good and the teacher reinforces expectations for conduct challenges effectively.	Teacher manages pupil behaviour highly effectively with clear rules that are consistently enforced.
Additional Adults	Additional adults are employed effectively in the classroom and support the work of the teacher.	Additional adults are very effective in the class and impact the learning of key students.

Literacy

We aim to build a proactive culture of identifying literacy issues upon entering Year 7 and working with students to improve their literacy skills and ensure successful attainment in Year 11. By intervening in the earlier years in school the aim is to prevent literacy intervention being required in Years 10 and 11. We want to ensure that all teachers are teachers of literacy. We want to promote a culture of reading for pleasure across the school. Our key aims are:

- To significantly reduce the number of students in school with a reading age of below 11.
- To secure significant improvements in reading ages for all Year 7s (and across all key focus groups).
- To improve confidence levels of our weakest readers in Years 8 and 9.
- To ensure that all teachers are consistently marking for literacy.
- To ensure that all teachers are embedding and actively teaching literacy skills (active reading, supported writing, oracy and key words including spellings) in their lessons.
- Reading for pleasure is improving across the school, in particular Years 7-9.
- To support students in becoming confident and articulate in speaking through developing opportunities for oracy in and out of the classroom.
- To contribute to securing better outcomes for our key groups (PP, SEND).

Numeracy

We aim to build a proactive culture with students receiving clear and consistent methods for key numerical ideas, starting from Year 7 and embedding and reinforcing these key skills in mathematics and other subjects where these skills feature. We aim to promote a culture where students can identify that the skills they are using in Maths are the same skills they use in other subjects, with different subjects providing the context.

We want to ensure that opportunities for numeracy and numeracy links are fully utilised across the curriculum and enrichment activities.

- To develop increased opportunities for students to engage through Numeracy activities through competitions, links to business, extra-curricular activities and raising awareness of the numeracy students are undertaking.
- To embed numeracy through delivery in other subjects – ensuring consistency of delivery, that opportunities for using numerical skills at the appropriate skill level are embraced and augmented, and that students are aware of the relevance of numeracy through other subjects.
- To improve communication with parents – supporting them to support their children completing mathematics at home.
- The work is aimed at developing a deep understanding and fluency, through targeted consolidation and application and problem solving activities.
- We identify gaps in learning through early intervention and target accordingly.

Feedback:

All students will be set aspirational targets that challenge them to be the best they can. Students will have periodic assessments in all subjects that assess if they are on track to reach these targets. Assessments will be moderated according to the subject moderation schedule to ensure assessments are graded consistently throughout the department and are used appropriately to make professional predictions in each data cycle.

Appendix I NLS Assessment and Reporting Model 2018-19

Appendix II NLS Target Setting Protocols 2018-19

Appendix III NLS Moderation Procedures 2018-19

Feedback should serve the following purposes:

- to advance student outcomes and progress
- to check and assess student's responses to learning tasks
- to inform the teacher (and the student) what they need to do next to progress
- to close the gap in student learning from where they are to where they need to be
- to provide the teacher with an evaluation of **their impact** on student learning

"Responsive teaching" in the context of any additional departmental guidelines, Teachers are encouraged to adjust their approach as necessary and are trusted to incorporate the outcomes into subsequent planning and teaching.

Feedback should help to motivate students to progress and should be adjusted to support the different level of needs of students. This does not mean always writing in-depth comments or being universally positive: sometimes short, challenging or oral feedback are more effective. Based on these principles it is essential that students work as hard as their teachers. For this to happen, teachers need to ensure their students know the answer to the following two questions:

- **What am I doing well in this subject?**
- **What do I need to do to improve my work in this subject?**

If students can answer these questions accurately, in subject – specific detail, they are receiving effective feedback. The teacher should also be able to know what a student is doing well in and what they need to do to improve

All relevant assessment and feedback will be built into Medium and Short term planning so that this can be quality assured.

To achieve consistency of practice and standards across the school we have the following Whole School non-negotiables:

- **Regular** use of FAR is used to move learning on during a scheme of learning (referenced in department planning documentation).
- Post FAR feedback, **specific, dedicated DIRT time** is given to allow a quality student response (this should be referenced in department planning).
- A formal, moderated assessment must inform the data drop and be in line with the department's long term plan. This can be a summatively judged piece or a FAR marked piece as long as it is in keeping with departmental guidelines.
- Data entry should be a **predicted** grade informed by **on-going assessment**.
- Vulnerable learners / key groups e.g. Pupil Premium. should be assessed / given feedback **first**.
- Gaps in learning through absence or lack of understanding to be **addressed as quickly as possible** – personalised strategies should be in place for catch-up.

Types of feedback:

FEED-UP: Compares the learner's current position with desired position – **it is focused on the present** e.g What the student got right / wrong in a test, assignment, exam question.

FEED-BACK: Compares the learner's current position with previous position – **it is focused on the past** e.g How achievement has changed in comparison to the last test, exam question etc.

FEED-FORWARD: Illustrates the desired target position based on current position – **it is focused on the future** e.g What next? Tasks that need to be completed in the future to achieve the desired target.

Principles for Home Learning :

Home Learning should provide opportunities outside the classroom to:

- Apply learning to consolidate and extend
- Research that either prepares for flipped learning or deepens learning
- Develop self-regulated learners through development of: revision skills and knowledge acquisition so that learners move from surface to deep learning
- Develop organisation and proactive learning behaviours

Revision home learning will develop student strategies how to revise; students will need to bring back evidence of what they have done and re-engage with their resources in the classroom in order to maximise recall.

Students will need to be **taught how** to revise, hence tasks set will initially be more structured to develop skills. This could be in the form of a mind-map, flash cards, mnemonics, scribble / repeat or annotation of knowledge organisers for knowledge based revision. For skills based subjects strategies could include flash cards and practice. As students develop metacognition skills PLC's can be used to identify foci and students can choose strategies which best suit them.

A research homework will be signposted to show how it fits into Mid-term planning and students will need to bring back evidence of what they have done and use it in their learning.

Students need to be **taught how** to research, so tasks will initially be more structured to develop research strategies. For example: structured research or a flipped learning task.

For both revision and research tasks students need to have been taught a range of strategies so that they can develop the metacognition skills to select strategies which work best for them or to evaluate their learning.

Non – negotiables:

The provision of home learning opportunities will differ between subjects and nature of courses, however home learning:

- Must be pro-actively engaged with post completion
- Must be frequent and regular, in line with mid-term plans
- Must be relevant to the learning in the classroom or interleaving

ICT across the Curriculum

ICT Across the Curriculum is a whole school commitment dedicated to ensuring that modern technologies are best-utilized to serve our core purpose of delivering quality first T&L and ensuring stretch & challenge for all.

This whole-school ICT commitment will touch upon improved communications that help to streamline operational processes and to promote the development of the school's profile and culture but its priority is to ensure that learning in the classroom is as engaging as possible and meets the student-centred needs of 21st Century Learners - working in conjunction, for example, with PiXL Apps and other such facility. Innovations and quality assurance will be driven by a dedicated coordinator who will work in collaboration with leadership teams across the school.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Governors:

To understand the key principles, values, vision and associated ideas which underpin the provision of teaching, learning & assessment and to use this understanding (as well as outcome and projected data) to support, monitor and challenge staff as well as students or groups of students.

Senior Leadership Team:

- To be proactive in reviewing and shaping principle, values and vision for teaching, learning & assessment
- To ensure that teaching, learning & assessment policy coordinates and integrates with other policies
- To provide whole-school support, training and intervention as appropriate
- To communicate clearly issues such as changing need and outcomes of provision

College, Faculty and Subject Leaders:

- To work collegiately in the formulation of long, medium and short term plans which take account of policy and which support all stakeholders in effective provision
- To monitor impact and, in concert with SLT and Governors, respond to emerging need
- To provide support, training and intervention as appropriate
- To ensure that teaching, learning & assessment policy is integrated into provision alongside other relevant policies
- To create a consistency of approach within individual teams and across subject/faculty areas

Teaching and Support Staff:

Using the principles of this policy to achieve the best possible teaching and learning for the students, ensuring the highest progress and attainment.

Students:

To make the most of the opportunities afforded to them and their peers, taking into account their own needs and personal qualities and attributes but also that of the group.

Parents and Carers:

To support the policy of the school, in line with the Home-School Agreement.

Links to associated documents

As indicated throughout this policy, this document needs to be read in conjunction with other documents. These other documents include but are not limited to:

- Pupil Premium Policy
- Engagement for Learning Policy
- CPD Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- SEND Policy
- Home Learning Policy
- Rewards Policy
- Feedback to Feedforward – whole school and departmental policies
- The World Class Basics (including for books) – co-constructed by students and staff

This document should be read especially in light of the school's Child Protection Policy

Date of Review: September 2019