



APPLEFORD SCHOOL

TEACHING AND LEARNING SYNOPSIS

This policy applies to the whole school, including boarding

Related Documents:

- Curriculum Policy
- Appendix B - Assessment Synopsis
- Appendix C - Differentiation Synopsis
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities Policy
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy

Available from:

- School Office and website

Monitoring and Review:

- We are aware of the need to review the school Teaching and Learning Synopsis regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school. As such, this Synopsis will be continuously monitored and reviewed by no later than two years from the date shown below.

Signed

Dr P. Gardner
Managing Director

Mr D King
Headmaster

Dated: April 2018

Review: April 2020

Introduction

At Appleford School we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the idea that both adults and pupils learn new things every day. 'Enjoyment is the birth right of every pupil. But the most powerful mix is the one that brings the two together. Pupils learn better when they are excited and engaged – but what excites and engages them best is truly excellent teaching, which challenges them and shows them what they can do. When there is joy in what they are doing, they learn to love learning.'

We maintain that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone; both teaching and learning should be fun. Through our teaching we equip pupils with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help pupils to lead happy and rewarding lives.

Classroom Observations

Classroom observations involve:

- Monitoring the input;
- Monitoring the output;
- Observing classroom practices;
- Monitoring engagement of pupils
- Scrutiny of work;

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Aim

To provide a broad and balanced specialist curriculum that incorporates a range of opportunities and challenges, that is accessible to all.

Objectives

- To ensure that all requirements of the school curriculum are met;
- To provide suitable opportunities to meet the needs of the full range of ability;
- To promote equality of opportunity in all curricular and extra-curricular activities;
- To continue to develop a dynamic curriculum model and timetable.

Quality of Teaching - Aims and objectives

We believe that people learn best in different ways. We aim to deliver a high quality of teaching with well-developed practices which meet the varying individual needs of the pupils.

We aim to:

- review schemes of work in order to generate effective lesson planning and to ensure appropriate coverage;
- investigate the range and balance of current teaching methods and the use of new technologies;
- recognise, as excellent practice, rigour and challenge in the classroom;
- develop approaches which promote equality of opportunity of all pupils, regardless of race, gender or creed;
- ensure the pivotal role of all staff in directing the pupils' learning process;
- promote and develop effective working relationships between pupils and staff in the classroom;
- enable pupils to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners;
- foster pupils' self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with other people;
- develop pupils' self-respect and encourage pupils to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others;
- show respect for all pupils regardless of race, gender or creed and, in so doing, promote positive attitudes towards other people and equality for all pupils;
- cater for the needs of individual pupils;
- enable pupils to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this community;
- enable achievement and provide challenge appropriate to the ability, interests and needs of each pupil;
- encourage lesson observations across year groups and departments to extend good practice, encourage dialogue and monitor quality.

Quality of Learning -Aims and objectives

We encourage a variety of teaching and learning styles, thus enabling pupils to acquire knowledge, to develop skills and develop lively enquiring minds. At our school we provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows pupil to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential. Pupils learn and flourish when they are healthy, protected from harm and authentically engaged and stimulated.

We aim to:

- continue the investigation into and the development of a range and balance of teaching and learning styles and thinking skills;
- promote learning which helps pupils grow into reliable, independent, confident and positive citizens;
- personalise learning;
- provide learning opportunities which enable pupils to develop skills required for personal research and group interaction;
- prepare pupils for a lifetime of learning by encouraging the development of self-supported, independent learning using specialist strategies.

Effective learning

We recognise that pupils learn in many different ways. All teaching provision is specialist.

We ensure the best possible environment for learning by developing a nurturing atmosphere in which pupils feel safe and have a sense of belonging. All teaching will be structured to maximise learning opportunities, and lessons will be planned in accordance with the following principles:

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- thorough knowledge and understanding of the individual needs of the pupils;
- the teaching should build on previous learning;
- it should give pupils the 'big picture' of the lesson;
- the teacher should explain the learning objectives, and why the lesson is important;
- the lesson should be presented in a range of styles;
- it should allow opportunities for the pupils to build up their own understanding through various activities;
- it should allow opportunities for the pupils to review what has been learnt;
- it should have built-in opportunities for feedback to the pupils, celebrating success and reviewing learning strategies;
- the teaching should indicate what the next step in the learning will be.

We offer opportunities for pupils to learn in different ways. These include:

- investigation and problem solving;
- research and finding out;
- group work;
- paired work;
- independent work;
- whole-class work;
- asking and answering questions;
- use of multimedia;
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest;
- creative activities;
- debates, role-plays and oral presentations;
- designing and making things;
- participation in athletic or physical activity.

We encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn – what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn. Assessment and marking are an integral part of the teaching and learning process. As outlined in the Assessment and Marking Policy, informal formative assessment (Assessment for Learning or AfL) takes place continuously in the classroom and comprises of:

- well understood learning objectives which are shared with the pupils
- sharing or creating learning outcomes with the pupils.
- to make them partners in their learning
- plenaries being used as assessment opportunities:
- effective teacher questioning
- observations of learning
- analysing and interpreting evidence of learning to inform future planning
- sensitive and constructive feedback to pupils
- targets set are SMART (specific, measurable, assessable, realistic and given in time)
- pupils should understand how well they can improve.

Effective Planning

When teaching we focus on motivating the pupils and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, so that they reach the highest level of personal achievement.

We base our teaching on our knowledge of the pupils' level of attainment. Teachers make ongoing assessments of each pupils' progress, and they use this information when planning their lessons. It enables them to take into account the abilities of all their pupils. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge and skills of the pupils. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each pupil's level of ability. When planning work for pupils with special educational needs we give due regard to information and outcomes contained in the pupils' EHCP. Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for pupils with disabilities. We value each pupil as a unique individual, and teachers are familiar with the relevant equal opportunities legislation covering

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race, gender and disability. We will strive to meet the needs of all our pupils, and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements related to matters of inclusion.

We set outcomes for the pupils in each academic year and we share these with pupils and their parents and carers. We review the progress of each pupil at every half term to inform teaching.

Effective Ethos, Classrooms and Learning Environment

Each of our teachers makes a special effort to establish good working relationships with all pupils in the class. We treat the pupils with kindness and respect. We recognise that they are all individuals with different needs, but we treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All our teachers follow the school policy with regard to discipline and classroom management. We expect all pupils to comply with Appleford's Code of Conduct. We praise pupils for their efforts and, by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. We insist on good order and behaviour at all times. When pupils misbehave we follow the guidelines as outlined in our school behaviour policy.

We aim to provide a learning environment which:

- is challenging and stimulating;
- is peaceful and calm;
- is happy and caring;
- is organised and well-resourced;
- makes learning accessible;
- is encouraging and appreciative;
- is welcoming;
- provides equal access and inclusion;
- provides a positive working atmosphere.

We ensure that all tasks and activities that the pupils perform are safe. When we plan to take pupils out of school, we follow a strict set of procedures to ensure safety: the venue is assessed, risk assessments are completed. Parents and carers are informed, and their permission obtained before the visit takes place. Learning Support Assistants and other adult helpers are deployed as effectively as possible. Sometimes they work with individual pupils and sometimes they work with small groups.

Our school is an attractive learning environment. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and classrooms and resources are appropriate to the needs of the children.

All our teachers reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and plan their professional development needs accordingly. We do all we can to support our teachers in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice. We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all.

Homework (Years 10 and 11)

We use tasks to consolidate learning and understanding, and to assist in the development of sound study skills habits. We use homework to:

- Develop pupils' ability to organise their own work;
- To reinforce concepts and skills learnt in class;
- To prepare pupils for the rigours of external examinations;
- To pre-learn vocabulary.

Time allocation

The timetable is designed around the needs of our pupils and ensures appropriate coverage of identified curriculum areas.

Resource Management

We expect teachers to

- use Learning Support Assistants effectively

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- use a variety of working areas with specialist layout to facilitate the movements of pupils where possible
- use a range of specialist resources
- use displays and exhibits to enhance learning
- make use of alternative recording methods
- regularly review and update practice.

Feedback and Reward Systems

We expect teachers to give feedback through -

- effective or written comment;
- regular assessments – including evaluative, diagnostic and standardised tests;
- target setting;
- discussion and collaborative work.

We expect teachers to use reward systems such as –

- the use of house points;
- inclusion of ‘Golden Time’ in the Lower School.

Through the reward systems we maintain good teacher/pupil relationships and encourage pupils’ motivation.

The Role of the Headmaster and Heads of School.

They support, monitor and review the school policies on teaching and learning. In particular they:

- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
- ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning;
- monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations;
- monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment through assessments;
- monitor the teaching and learning through lesson observations, planning monitoring and work scrutiny;
- ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching;
- develop and monitor long and medium term planning;
- monitor the effectiveness of the school’s teaching and learning policies throughout the school;
- in liaison with the SMT, promote and develop the process of school development planning.

Communication with Parents

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping pupils to learn. We inform parents and carers about what and how their child is learning by:

- sending formal Reports and Progress cards to parents in which we explain the progress made by each pupil and indicate how the pupil can improve further;
- posting information on the parent portal and public pages of the school website;
- direct communication with parents re celebration or concerns;
- being available - we have an open door policy.

We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We would like parents to:

- ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and PE kit;
- do their best to keep their pupil healthy and fit to attend school;
- inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child’s performance or behaviour at school;
- promote a positive attitude towards school, staff and learning in general;
- fulfil the requirements of any home/school agreement;
- ensure that their child has the best possible attendance and punctuality record.

Monitoring and review

We are aware of the need to review the school teaching and learning policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school. We will therefore review this policy every two years, or earlier if necessary. Teaching and Learning is monitored through the school's yearly cycle of self-evaluation.

Annually all teaching staff will have lesson observations, supervisions and appraisals to ensure continuity and conformity both across year groups and subjects. Support and training is offered/provided to new staff.