

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY 2017

Rationale & Purpose

Rationale

We endeavour to ensure that the experience that every child gains from The Albany School will be high quality in all aspects; be it social, moral, spiritual or academic. We aim to create a student centred school where each person knows and accepts their roles and responsibilities in reaching targets and aspirations of all kinds.

Purpose

The teaching and learning policy is intended to provide a clear outline of the approaches we expect to see in each lesson, across every department. We expect the quality of teaching to be high, and we expect students to be held accountable for their own learning. We ensure that teachers are supported, and are offered on-going professional training appropriate to their needs. We monitor the impact of teaching closely, and set high targets to encourage challenge.

As a school we:

- empower teachers to deliver outstanding lessons
- ensure a common high quality of experience for all students to help maximise each individual's potential, whilst supporting creativity and individuality within learning and teaching
- help share all learning and teaching practice that is of an excellent standard
- provide an insight into the review and development of current and future learning and teaching practice, which enables staff and students to remain stimulated and focused.
- provide training for all staff, experienced and new, teachers and associate staff to deliver quality lessons.
- provide high quality learning to learn displays which augment learning and teaching

As a staff we have agreed that Good / Outstanding Learning is:

- when students are captivated and enthused by what they are learning
- an active process – a product of students doing rather than receiving
- linked to prior knowledge
- supported by both the teacher and other students, and takes the form of interaction, collaboration and teacher intervention
- collaborative through co-operation, dialogue and creating knowledge with others
- centred on the learners' responsibility for their own learning. They are able to exercise choice, develop goals, plan their approach and work independently.
- reflective and enables learners to monitor and review the learning
- where learners make considerably better progress than may be expected
- when students display a strong desire to contribute the effort and concentration required to

match the teachers' passion for learning

As a staff we have agreed that Good / Outstanding Teaching:

- provides carefully structured differentiated activities matched sensitively to students' needs, especially for EAL, SEN, more able learners
- gives students some responsibility for their work and independence
- models what learners have to do
- develops well planned, prepared and pacy lessons that maintain high levels of interaction with the class
- provides ample, challenging work stemming from expert knowledge of the curriculum
- maintains high levels of student involvement in tasks
- creates a positive atmosphere in the classroom through excellent relationships
- boosts self-esteem and incorporates high levels of praise and encouragement rather than retributions and sanctions
- reviews learning to connect and consolidate prior learning
- starts and finishes on time and uses time productively
- follows the school's presentation policy
- provides opportunities for students to talk about the work before writing it
- uses student friendly resources
- uses a variety of approaches; strategies and techniques
- has a clear structure which shows progress and reviews learning throughout
- makes prior use of information on base data registers to plan the lesson for each individual student
- incorporates new technologies effectively
- makes use of summative assessment
- supports literacy across the curriculum
- uses AfL effectively through sharing learning objectives and outcomes with all learners, using probing, higher order and open questions linked to outcomes, pair and group talk, developing students' own and peer assessment, opportunities to use traffic lights
- uses homework effectively; particularly to reinforce and extend what is learnt at school, or to prepare for a new topic

Curriculum Organisation :

Option choices take place during year 8 and the GCSE courses are allocated at the start of year 9.

The Banding system (see separate document) determines the option choices which each student has.

It is expected that all students in the Fast Track will take GCSE s which will lead to the EBacc qualification at the end of year 11. This included English Language and Literature, Maths, science, History or Geography and a Modern Foreign Language. Once these options have been allocated, students will have 2 additional options available to them.

Students in the Upper and Middle Bands will not necessarily be required to take these subjects as they may need to be allocated additional literacy and numeracy support, or a more vocational cluster of GCSE s. The options will be discussed with them on a bespoke basis, and they will be required to discuss this with their parents also.

Target Setting

Targets are set each year by the school which are aspirational. Targets are set based on a minimum of 3 levels of progress across the two key stages. They are set for every student in every subject, and they can be tracked throughout each term as yearly targets are also calculated. These targets can be moved up, but not down and the success of all results are judged according to how many students reach or exceed their targets.

Progress towards these targets is accessible to parents through the school portal, and we report formally to parents 3 times per year.

Reporting to parents

We report to parents formally three times per year, however parents are encouraged to communicate with us as often as necessary. The first contact point should be the tutor, then the Head of Year or Head of Department, and then a member of the Leadership Group if the situation remains unresolved.

Lesson planning, delivery and evaluation

Planning

Formal lesson plans are optional for day to day use, however it is advisable to use them for a formal lesson observation.

Learning Objectives should be in evidence every lesson, and all students should know them. They do not need to be written in books, but may be if it is deemed to be useful. A 4 part lesson plan should be adhered to in that every lesson must have the following features:

1. A clear and prompt start with the LO clearly stated
2. A 'knowledge phase' of the lesson

3. A 'hand over / practice / assess / part of the lesson where the students do an activity to practice, use or assess the learning
4. A prompt end to the lesson with a summary, or round up of the lesson. Some departments use an exit card.

Delivery

Lessons should be interactive, student focused and have challenge. Lessons should have good pace, and a variety of techniques should be used throughout for the teacher to assess the LEARNING of students.

Here is a handy list of Do and Don't suggestions which should be taken into account when delivering a lesson:

Good and Outstanding Lessons

DO

- Have an interesting, engaging and relevant starter
- Have activities which make the most of natural curiosity
- Have elements of challenge
- Have a fast pace in which time is effectively used
- Have activities where students talk about their learning, and explain how they reach their targets
- Have teaching methods which inspire all students to meet challenging objectives
- Have questioning which requires students to justify their thinking and use imagination
- Have plenaries which reflect on the learning which has taken place – there can be several 'plenaries' in a lesson
- Have activities which allow independent learning to achieve challenging outcomes
- Have methods which allow students to be in charge of their own learning
- Have success criteria which is shared / negotiated with all students

DON'T

- Have learning objectives which are actually tasks
- Have a relaxed pace with little rigour
- Have tasks which are easily achievable for the majority of students
- Have too much time where the teacher is directly leading and controlling the task
- Have too much teacher talk
- Have too much time in the lesson where the learning is not checked either orally or in writing
- Have lessons where students work in silence for long periods unless it is absolutely necessary

Evaluation

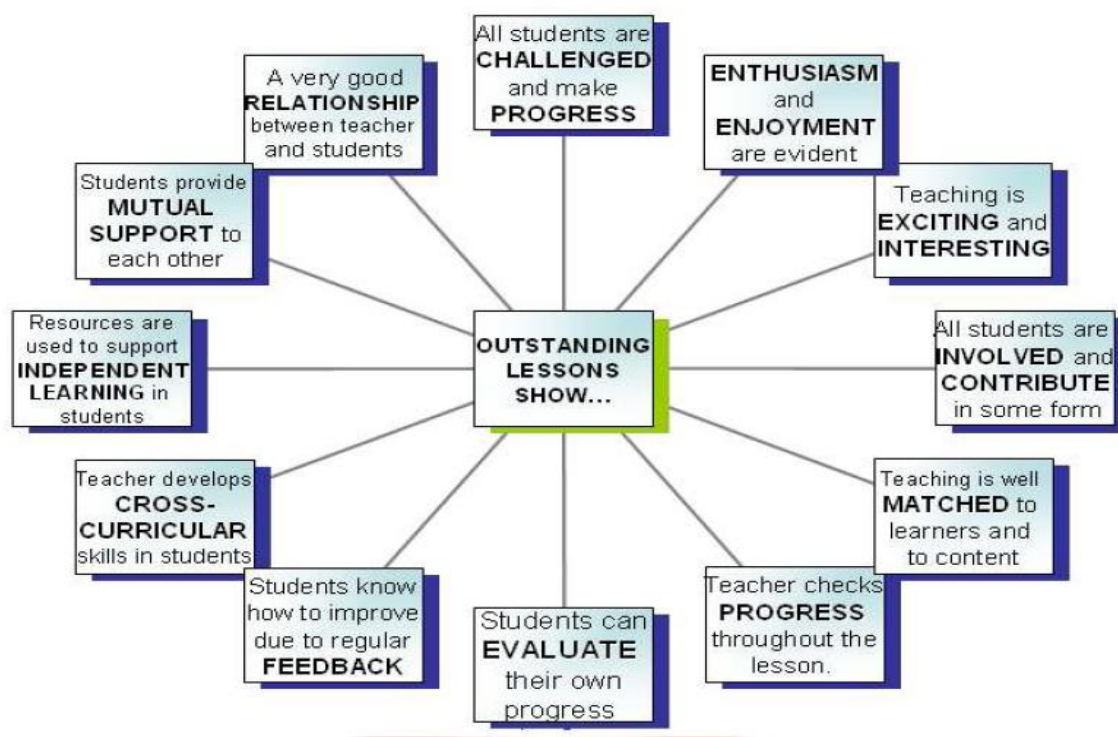
Lessons should be evaluated by the teacher as part of a reflective process which all teachers undertake to develop good pedagogy. The **LEARNING** is the key to success, not the activity in itself.

Lessons will be formally observed by line managers up to 3 times per year, and monitoring visits to informally monitor standards in the classroom will take place each half term.

In addition to standards setting lesson observations (both formal and informal), learning walks will take place each week which will involve a variety of teaching staff. The function of these is to raise awareness between departments, and to share good practice.

Copies of formal feedback sheets for lesson observations are included in this document, as are the sheets for feedback from learning walks.

Assessment for Learning: brief overview



There is a whole school booklet for assessment for learning and it contains a huge number of assessment for learning techniques and ideas which are effective in lessons. The ideas and suggestions are easy to use and can be adapted to any curriculum area or year group. There are also examples of power point presentations used for training sessions at The Albany School. These are available in paper or electronic form.

Marking Policy

Please see full policy for details regarding responsibilities of teachers/HODs/Leadership Group/students/parents/governors.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Learning at The Albany School

Please see the full policy on lesson observation guidance, monitoring and book checks.

Feedback from Learning Walks: These are usually informal but are much appreciated by colleagues.

Support Systems

Departments work collaboratively to support colleagues, and in the first instance the Head of Department should be consulted should any problems arise. Each department has a referral timetable to support behaviour management of students, and to ensure work is completed to the highest possible standard.

Heads of Year support Heads of Department when necessary, and referral systems are in place from the Heads of Department to the pastoral team.

Please see the New Teacher Guide and the School Behaviour Policy for more details