



The
Westgate School

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy

The Westgate School

Approved by:	[Name]	Date: 06/01/23
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The Westgate School is a Learning Community

At The Westgate School, we believe that learning is the process by which students gradually acquire and assimilate knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes to enable them to make greater sense of the world and to become global ambassadors in our increasingly

interconnected world. The Westgate School's curriculum inspires and challenges all learners whilst preparing them for the future to be #equippedforlife. Teaching and learning is central to our pursuit as educators to offer an exceptional learning experience to our students and a reflection of our core values: Ambitious, Reflective and Kind.

We expect all our staff to deliver high quality, stimulating and dynamic lessons, where every teacher is a good teacher. We expect all students to be supported and challenged to make good progress in their learning. Students of all ability levels will be given equal opportunities to learn to achieve their full potential. Our purpose is to create a learning community which fosters motivation and allows all students to flourish. As a community of learners, we have a fundamental duty to ensure everyone associated with the school sees themselves as a lifelong learner.

1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- explain how we will create an environment at our school where students learn best and love to do so.
- summarise expectations to make sure everyone is committed to achieving a consistent approach to teaching and learning across our school.
- promote high expectations and raising standards of achievement for all students in our school.
- involve students, parents and the wider school community in students' learning and development.

2. Our guiding principles

Learning and teaching is the core focus of the school. Good and outstanding teaching which promotes good and outstanding learning, progress and enjoyment is the key to raising standards. All our students have special skills, abilities and aptitudes and are entitled to access a broad, challenging and appropriate curriculum. All students are entitled to experience a variety of learning activities, which enables them to exceed their expected levels of progress. Our aim is to help students to become creative and independent thinkers who are not afraid to take risks and see mistakes as opportunities for learning. **Leadership at all levels and all staff have** a responsibility, collectively and individually, to contribute to the delivery of the curriculum. All staff are also learners and must strive to improve their practice through self-reflection, peer support and Continuing Professional Development. The school recognises that continued professional support, coaching and mentorship at all levels are essential to empower staff to deliver effective learning experiences.

Students at The Westgate School learn best when they:

- Have their basic physical needs met

- Feel secure, safe and valued
- Feel a sense of belonging to the group
- Are engaged and motivated
- Can see the relevance of what they are doing – learning in context
- Know what outcome is intended
- Can link what they are doing to other experiences
- Are supported to understand the task
- Have the physical space, the tools needed and access to the necessary materials
- Are not disrupted or distracted by others
- Can work in groups or pairs or independently as required
- Receive guidance or support in appropriate ways (such as teacher modelling of process) at appropriate times
- Can practise what they are learning in safe and supportive environment
- Can apply the learning in both familiar and new contexts
- Can persevere and are guided in how to be resilient when learning is hard
- Can manage their emotions if things are not going well
- Recognise that all learners make mistakes and recognise that mistakes can also further our understanding and help us learn

3. Curriculum provision

At The Westgate School, it is expected that the curriculum will:

- fulfil statutory requirements.
- ensure continuity and progression within the school and between phases of education; whatever their starting point.
- meet the needs of students of all abilities and provide challenge for all.
- enable students to make exceptional progress to achieve their personal best.
- afford opportunities for all students to develop a high level of literacy and numeracy required for success in the wider curriculum and in adult life.
- lead to qualifications for students – regardless of background – that are valued by employers and for entry into Higher Education.
- remove barriers so that disadvantaged students when compared to their peers achieve well.
- prepare students to make informed and appropriate choices for their future career pathways.
- provide teaching and learning opportunities relating to careers and labour markets in subjects across the curriculum.

- provide equal opportunities for all students to access a full range of learning experiences which fosters a love of learning and a sense of curiosity beyond statutory guidelines.
- expand students' perspectives through a range of spiritual, moral, social, and cultural opportunities to promote their sense of moral and social responsibility.
- foster confident young people who are willing to challenge themselves outside their comfort zone, take risks and live fulfilling lives.
- develop a strength of character and resilience that will help pupils to make positive life choices to overcome challenges they may encounter in life.
- ensure that all students can thrive and develop as healthy, positive citizens who understand how to stay safe.

4. Objectives

Teaching, learning and assessment at The Westgate School is a shared responsibility and everyone in our learning community has an important role to play. This policy exists to clarify what we see as best practice and to clarify the expectations the school has for staff and students to ensure that all our students learn well in every lesson.

Teachers must:

- follow the expectations for teaching and professional conduct as set out in the Teachers' Standards
- take the backgrounds, needs and abilities of all students into account and differentiate learning to cater to the needs of all students
- work collaboratively to ensure consistency in identifying and sharing best practice in teaching and learning across all areas of the curriculum
- provide carefully structured activities and a variety of approaches which are matched appropriately to learners' needs, making use of the full range of data available
- support and challenge students to achieve their best by teaching high quality and stimulating lessons using evidence-based pedagogy
- develop well planned, prepared and paced lessons that maintain high levels of interaction with the class via rigorous questioning to check for understanding
- provide ample, challenging work stemming from expert knowledge of the curriculum, how to teach it and how learners learn best
- update parents/carers on learners' progress via calendar data drops, AtL reports, school communications and phone calls home where required
- listen to students' views, evaluate, and reflect on best practice
- evaluate and reflect on their own practice
- provide home learning in line with department policy
- maintain high levels of learner involvement in tasks

- Provide opportunities and guidance to apply and develop literacy, numeracy, ICT and other skills
- Give learners responsibility for their work and provide guidance as students practice and progress towards independence
- Explicitly teach students the metacognitive skills and retrieval practice skills they need to master their knowledge and content
- Create a positive atmosphere in the classroom through excellent relationships
- Incorporate high levels of praise and encouragement
- Deploy support staff effectively to ensure their impact on students' progress is maximised
- Seek advice from specialist staff on the needs of students
- Actively engage parents/carers in their child's learning (phone call home, Comms messaging, parent meetings, Parents' Evening meetings and subject focus evenings)
- Use the techniques of assessment for learning to provide students informative feedback to enable them to understand their strengths and what their principle areas for improvement are
- Use analysis of formative and summative assessment and tracking data to inform their teaching and to structure intervention strategies
- Meet the expectations set out in our Curriculum Policy and Behaviour and Engagement Policy to allow all students to make progress
- Follow the guidance of Curriculum Leaders to enact the whole school and departmental policy.

Support staff must:

- Know students well and differentiate support to meet their individual learning needs
- Support teaching and learning with flexibility and resourcefulness
- Ask questions to make sure they've understood expectations for learning
- Use agreed assessment for learning strategies
- Use effective marking and feedback as required
- Engage in providing inspiring lessons and learning opportunities
- Feedback observations of students to teachers
- Identify and use resources to support learning
- Have high expectations and celebrate achievement
- Demonstrate and model themselves as learners

Students must:

- Arrive to lessons well equipped and ready to learn
- Take responsibility for their own learning and support the learning of others
- Begin the 'do now' activity upon arrival to lessons

- Participate fully and take an active part in learning, pose questions about their learning and strive for continual improvement
- Take pride in developing and applying their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum
- Complete work to their best ability
- Be enthusiastic, resilient and responsible in learning and improving skills
- Respond as appropriate to specific feedback to improve and develop their work including DIRT activities or redrafting tasks
- Rise to challenges, working collaboratively and supportively with their peers
- Be curious, ambitious, engaged and confident learners

Curriculum Leaders

The principal focus for Curriculum Leaders is the development and effective monitoring of teaching and learning within the department and of all team members. In addition, Curriculum Leaders should lead and facilitate the sharing of good practice to improve all aspects of teaching and learning via Curriculum Meeting Time and wider CPD opportunities.

Curriculum Leaders (CLs) must:

- Ensure Schemes of Learning and assessment tasks are appropriate, rigorous and sufficiently challenging
- Ensure the schemes of learning and assessment tasks are reviewed and amended as appropriate
- Regularly lead their team to level work against age related expectations in standardisation and moderation practice
- Enable regular department discussions to focus on promoting achievement and result in actions that challenge underachievement
- hold team members to account via robust analysis of student data and interventions in place to overcome any underachievement
- monitor and track the progress of individuals and groups of students against relevant data.

Directors of Learning (DOLs) must:

- use a variety of sources of information to have an overview of achievement and progress levels within their year group
- liaise with students, staff and parents / carers and take action to tackle underachievement where patterns can be identified for individual students across subjects
- liaise in partnership with Curriculum Leaders to ensure effective actions are in place that are shared to maximise impact for students

- action interventions to maintain outstanding levels of behaviour and engagement for all students within the year group
- promote our school values and create opportunities for self-reflection
- reward and praise students' efforts / work / achievements and celebrate success within year assemblies

Senior Leadership Team (SLT) must:

- Have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality, inclusive education to all
- Celebrate achievement and have high expectations for everyone
- Hold staff and pupils to account for their teaching and learning
- Plan and evaluate strategies to secure high-quality teaching and learning across the school
- Manage resources to support high-quality teaching and learning
- Provide support and guidance to other staff, and particularly to Curriculum Leaders through coaching and mentoring and to empower middle leaders in the delivery of the policy
- Input and monitor the impact of continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities to improve staff's practice and subject knowledge
- Promote team working at all levels, for example by buddying teachers up to support one another where appropriate
- Address underachievement and intervene promptly
- Ensure that curriculum areas are adhering to the whole school marking and feedback model

5. The Westgate School key points for every lesson

All staff play an imperative role in ensuring students begin lessons in a calm and focussed manner. All teaching staff should meet and greet students at the door as they enter the classroom – one foot in, one foot out model. Staff should be a visible presence on the corridor at each changeover.

Staff should employ as many of these key points in lessons as possible:

- Immediate engagement for students with a 'Do now' activity
- 'Do now' activities should practice content retrieval
- The register should be taken in the first 5 minutes of the lesson
- Share learning outcomes of the lesson – ensure there are clear levels of challenge for all students
- Present new material using small steps
- Provide clear and detailed instructions and explanations
- Provide models and guide student practice

- Use open ended and higher order questioning to facilitate challenge, to engage students, to monitor understanding and to address misconceptions
- Provide a variety of activities with appropriate and effective differentiation/scaffolding
- Provide regular learning and progress reviews throughout the lesson (mini consolidations)
- Provide opportunities for reflection, redrafting and improvement of work
- Model the use of Standard English, academic language and subject specific terminology in speaking and writing exercises
- Provide opportunities for students to work independently and collaboratively so they can develop and embed these lifelong skills

6. Home learning

Home learning will support students to make the link between what they have learned in school and the wider world. It is most effective when done in a supportive, secure environment, with focused time set aside.

All home learning will be communicated to students in class. Home learning will be reasonable in challenge and length, and its purpose will be clearly outlined alongside each task. To remove any barriers to learning, all necessary resources will be made available to students.

7. Remote learning

All students should attend school, in line with our attendance policy. Remote education is not viewed as an equal alternative to attendance in school.

On occasions where the school is not able to open due to safety or due to guidance from local or central government, remote education for students will be considered. On occasions where individual students, for a limited duration, are unable to physically attend school but are able to continue learning, remote education provision will be considered.

8. Assessment

Student progress is tracked using a combination of formative and summative assessment. Most assessment should be formative and used to inform learning.

In addition:

- assessment for learning strategies should be used for all students.
- home learning must be planned, clear and meaningful.
- effective assessment and marking of work are fundamental to successful learning and teaching.
- all assessment information should be used formatively.

Formative comments should:

- highlight achievement
- be diagnostic
- indicate how improvement can be achieved usually consisting of one or two targets – it should be subject specific
- be personal by using the student's first name
- encourage and support the student in a constructive way
- it can be in the form of WWW (What Went Well) and EBI (Even Better If). The EBI can be a subject specific question that challenges the student even further or probes their understanding: example: What would happen if you increased the temperature of the acid?

The Westgate School recognises the importance of different forms of feedback to promote learning and that all feedback (verbal and written) should contribute to the learning process and provide students with positive and constructive feedback.

Acknowledgement Marking (flick and tick). This checks that work is completed and obvious mistakes are corrected and this includes students' notes where appropriate to ensure that key learning points have been written down accurately.

Quality Marking (Deep): This is used on key pieces of work and it acknowledges that awarding grades/ levels alone does not raise standards.

Peer Marking and Self-Assessment: this informs the student of the learning progress (formative).

Verbal feedback: this is used continuously in lessons as part of the formative assessment process (but does not replace Quality Marking (Deep) which must be evident in all students' work as per department marking policies).

9. Monitoring and evaluation

We will monitor teaching and learning in our school to make sure that all of our students make the best possible progress from their starting points.

- SLT, CLs and teachers will monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching on students' learning through:
- Conducting learning walks
- Conducting subject deep dives including gathering information from student panels
- Reviewing marking and feedback

- Pulse checks

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governors and Senior Leadership Team.

11. Links with other policies

This policy links with the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour and Engagement Policy
- Marking and Feedback Policy
- SEND Policy