

YSGOL GYFUN BRYNTIRION COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL



Teaching and Learning Policy



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RATIONALE

Recent scientific research, particularly in the fields of neurology and psychology, has improved our understanding of how the brain works and how learning can be improved or accelerated. In response to this the school has, over recent years, investigated ways to improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school. The development of effective teaching and learning is a fundamental aspect of school improvement and is dependent on partnerships between learners, school staff, professionals, parents and others in the community. At Bryntirion we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the notion that learning should be a rewarding experience for everyone. Through our teaching we can equip our learners with the skills, knowledge and understanding that will enable them to be good citizens and employees.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Learning and Teaching policy is intended to promote consistency and high standards and the achievement of the school aims. At Bryntirion we aim to provide a caring, supportive and stimulating environment with high quality teaching through which to foster:

- a positive approach to learning;
- independent learners who are confident, flexible and able to co-operate with others;
- learners with high expectations and aspirations to succeed;
- learners who are challenged and stimulated;
- learners with transferable skills that can be used in school and the world of work; and
- a personalised approach to learning so that all learners' individual needs are addressed.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING

a) Planning and Preparation

Teachers should plan lessons:

- which allow pupils to progress in their learning;
- which are structured around the school's Learning Cycle, use the school's Lesson Plan and are based on the research findings and support materials in the Bryntirion Teacher's Toolkit.
- where the objectives are stated clearly;
- where there is a link with prior learning;
- where the success criteria are clearly communicated to the pupils;
- which use the school's PDR Cycle for pupils, namely helping pupils to plan, develop and review their work; when appropriate;
- where pupils are given opportunities to use and practise what they are learning;
- which use plenaries to summarise learning, and to help pupils to understand how to improve;
- which allow pupils to develop and practise higher order thinking skills such as creativity, analysis, problem solving, decision making and application;
- which are differentiated for varying needs by task, resources, outcomes and/or method;

- which use stimulating resources including the use of ICT and e-learning, which are differentiated as appropriate to the pupils;
- which provide pace and challenge for all pupils;
- which use effective questioning to direct and challenge pupils;
- which incorporate the school's Literacy, Numeracy and ICT Policies;
- which meet external requirements;
- which are enjoyable and interesting; and
- which inspire and motivate pupils.

b) Teaching strategies

Teachers should use teaching strategies which:

- create opportunities for pupils to learn in their preferred learning style and to develop their ability to learn in the other learning styles;
- allow pupils to work both independently and collaboratively and enable them to contribute to one another's learning;
- monitor and evaluate pupils' progress throughout the lesson;
- enable pupils to evaluate and assess their own and each other's learning;
- use positive behaviour management and encouragement for pupils to achieve, including praise and rewards according to school policy;
- deliver topics which are relevant to pupils, and
- use others to deliver lessons when appropriate (e.g. other pupils, outside agencies).

EFFECTIVE LEARNING

Effective learning takes place when students:

- understand what they are learning and why;
- know how to learn, including questioning and thinking skills, using methods and resources;
- know how to make progress and improve;
- have the appropriate attitude needed in the classroom, including respect, interest, responsibility and response to challenge;
- understand how to work independently, without close supervision and how to work collaboratively;
- recognise the skills they need to develop, including enquiry, thinking, research, analysis and reflection.
- co-operate with classroom rules, routines and expectations for behaviour;
- have their needs catered for;
- enjoy a positive relationship with the teacher and with their peers;
- are engaged and on task;
- feel happy, comfortable and secure;
- are in the best physical and emotional state; and
- enjoy what and how they are learning.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching and Learning are monitored and evaluated in a number of ways:

- Performance Management meetings with the Team Leaders.
- Subject Leaders observe each member of their department teach once a year as part of the Performance Management process. Line Managers will observe Subject Leaders.
- a member of the SLT will observe every member of staff teach once a year.
- a report is written on these observations using the school's Summary of Lesson Monitoring form.
- peer observations
- a Pupil Trail which monitors the quality of the pupils' day in school, including the learning outcomes, the variety of experiences, and the level of involvement, relationships, enthusiasm and enjoyment.
- the Scrutiny of Work monitors the quality of marking of students' work and of the feedback given.
- the Listening to Learners initiative through the School Council, surveys and discussions with students gives them the opportunity to feed back on the quality of teaching and learning they receive.
- Departmental meetings
- Parents' evenings
- Attainment data
- ESIS

The processes described above contribute to:

- raising achievement and school improvement;
- improved classroom teaching and learning;
- identification of the professional development needs of teachers;
- recognition of future development needs; and
- the continued success of the school.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Head Teacher

The Head Teacher is responsible for monitoring the performance of members of the SLT and ensuring that there are appropriate resources to ensure excellent Teaching and Learning within the school.

This can be achieved by:

- ensuring that strategies are in place to implement and promote the policy throughout the school;
- implementing arrangements for the regular monitoring and review of the policy;
- providing the administrative support, training and time that will allow teachers to teach and the pupils to learn;
- ensuring that all staff are appropriately trained and are competent to teach the programmes of study in which they are directed to participate;
- reporting annually to the governing body on the progress of the policy;
- promoting learning to parents and pupils;

- promoting whole school approaches that encourage enthusiasm for learning and continued improvement among both pupils and staff;
- leading by example in his/her commitment to effective teaching and learning;
- ensuring that the organisation of the school day and year support good teaching and learning;
- ensuring that a system is in place to disseminate good practice across the school; and
- supporting staff in their dealings with pupils who are having a negative influence upon the teaching and learning of others.

Senior Leadership Team

The SLT sets priorities and targets for improvement at whole school level based on evidence gained from monitoring procedures. They have regard for the Teaching and Learning policy when making decisions about implementing, monitoring and evaluating all areas of the curriculum.

This can be achieved by:

- keeping the Head teacher informed as to the progress of the policy;
- ensuring that teaching and learning can take place within an safe and stimulating environment;
- ensuring team leaders are fulfilling their role in improving teaching and leading their teams in that improvement;
- supporting staff in their dealings with pupils who are disrupting the learning of others;
- observing staff as part of the school's monitoring and evaluation policy; and
- advising the Head on any strategies that could be initiated or improved.

Maximising Potential Group

The MPG engages in action research to identify good practice to inform SLT of effective strategies to ensure that excellent teaching and learning occurs across the curriculum.

This can be achieved by:

- monitoring the needs of both staff and pupils in terms of support and development and responding wherever possible to their requests;
- keeping up to date with educational thought and developments; and
- cascading new ideas and techniques to staff and pupils.

Subject Leaders

Subject Leaders are responsible for the effective teaching of their subjects, evaluating the quality of teaching and standards of pupils' achievements and setting targets for improvement.

This can be achieved by:

- evaluating the teaching of their subject and the planning of lessons and using this analysis to identify and share effective practice and to lead action for improvement;
- ensuring curriculum coverage, continuity and progress for all pupils;
- establishing and implementing clear policies and practices for assessing, recording and reporting on pupil progress and setting targets for further improvement;
- analysing and interpreting data on pupils' performance against school expectations and other comparative data; setting expectations and targets and implementing actions for the achievement of individual pupils and key groups including, for example, those pupils catered for in the Mentoring Scheme, gender groups, MAT, ALN, EAL and minority groups;
- monitoring pupils' work by regular sampling of homework, class work, pupils' responses and attitudes in order to make a comparative evaluation of pupils' work against other classes and year groups to ensure quality, consistency and to implement strategies for improvement;
- observing teachers at least annually and giving constructive feedback; and
- evaluating the progress of teaching and learning targets in Departmental Development Plans, in line with the School Development Plan.

Classroom Teachers

Classroom teachers are responsible for the progress of pupils in their classes and for self-evaluating their own professional development.

This can be achieved by:

- self-evaluation of their subject knowledge and understanding of educational initiatives;
- self-evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of their own teaching and their classroom management;
- monitoring pupil progress to ensure they achieve well against prior achievement and similar groups nationally;
- working with LSAs in the classroom to ensure that all pupils can access their teaching;
- providing the pupil information required to support the school's mentoring scheme;
- self-evaluation of their contribution to the policies and aspirations of the school; and
- sharing in the consultation and trial of new initiatives and strategies and implementing these as directed by SLT.

Heads of Years

Heads of Years are responsible for the monitoring and evaluating the progression and well being and the overall experience of groups and individuals in their year groups and for providing support and advice to those pupils, both socially and academically.

This can be achieved by:

- monitoring academic progress and attitudes of individual pupils through academic tracking
- encouraging and developing the ability of pupils to evaluate and take responsibility for their own learning;
- monitoring of behaviour, homework, use of planners, rewards and sanctions, uniform and attendance.
- monitoring the progress and potential of the year group, and using pupil data to identify and set targets for specific pupils according to their needs;
- maintaining an overview of the experience of pupils in their year group by e.g. monitoring the behaviour database, information on LISOL, cross-curricular activities;
- monitoring the work of tutors and quality of tutor time, e.g. checking of planners;
- monitoring attitudes to learning through e.g. attendance and homework;
- reporting back to the School Leadership Team and to staff as requested; and
- liaising with parents, guardians and external agencies as required.

Form Tutors

Form tutors are responsible for contributing to, and monitoring the progression and well being of, individual pupils in their tutor group and for providing support and advice to those pupils, both socially and academically.

This can be achieved by:

- monitoring academic progress and attitudes of individual pupils through academic tracking;
- encouraging and developing the ability of pupils to evaluate and take responsibility for their own learning; and
- monitoring of behaviour, homework, use of planners, rewards and sanctions, uniform and attendance.

Parents

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly. They can help their children to progress by supporting them in their learning.

This can be achieved by:

- taking an interest in their children's learning;

- ensuring that they have the appropriate environment and resources to complete their work at home;
- encouraging their children to follow the school rules; and
- attending Parents' Evenings.

Pupils

Learners are responsible for ensuring that they are prepared to follow the instructions of their teacher and carry out work to the best of their ability.

This can be achieved by:

- taking responsibility for their own learning, assessing their own progress and working with the teacher to set targets for improvement;
- ensuring that they arrive to lessons on time;
- completing their homework and meeting the deadlines which are set; and
- ensuring that they follow the school rules and do not disrupt the learning of others.

Governors

It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to approve, monitor and review this policy.

This can be achieved by:

- monitoring the policy in terms of results and added value in examinations and the numbers of pupils continuing to pursue their education; and
- monitoring the comments of inspectors, parents, staff and Head Teacher.

Learning Support Assistants (L.S.A.)

The primary responsibility of a Learning Support Assistant is to help pupils to access what is being taught thereby supporting the class teacher.

This can be achieved by:

- supporting individuals with difficulties;
- ensuring effective discipline; and
- liaising with the SENCO and contributing information at Review meetings.