

Working Together at Cheney School

# Teaching and Learning: **the Handbook and Policy**







## Our 5 Teaching and Learning strands are:

- **Strand 1:** Information and knowledge - our teachers are subject experts who use clear instructions and stimulating resources
- **Strand 2:** Support and access - our teachers understand and overcome students' barriers to learning
- **Strand 3:** Success and achievement - our teachers support students' achievement by modelling, effective task setting and recognising success
- **Strand 4:** Assessment and adjustment - our teachers know how to assess students' progress and how to adjust their teaching accordingly
- **Strand 5:** Feedback and progress - our teachers provide feedback which has an impact on students' progress

### **Rationale: excellent and effective practice**

Teaching and learning is the reason staff and students come to school each day.

We want our students to be:

- engaged in and excited by their learning;
- supported to overcome barriers and develop strengths;
- literate, numerate and able to make safe and sensible decisions;
- knowledgeable about the world around them.

We want our staff to have:

- clear understanding of shared approaches to effective teaching and learning;
- the autonomy to make sensible decisions about what is right for their students;
- consistent routines and processes which support calm and productive classrooms;
- support and opportunities to develop their teaching practice over time.

Our Policy and Handbook have been based upon contributions from, and consultation with, staff at all career stages; the findings of our Quality Assurance processes; evidence-based research; and examples of great practice from other effective schools.

## Strand 1: Information and knowledge

*Our teachers are subject experts who use clear instructions and stimulating resources*

### What is our shared practice?

- Teachers have and share excellent subject knowledge, including understanding common subject misconceptions.
- Teachers are careful about planning how they give instructions and deliver new information and knowledge to ensure clarity and a focus on what is key to students' understanding.
- Teachers use a wide range of examples to help students to understand a new topic and are confident to deliver new content in an enthusiastic and energetic way.
- Curriculum content is well-matched to learners and allows stretch and challenge. Heads of Faculty have created detailed Curriculum Maps which outline content, intent and assessments.
- Opportunities for recall, overlearning and revision are planned into our curriculum. For example, by making use of:
  - regular low-stakes quizzing
  - DNAs which refer to prior learning
  - knowledge organisers (typically one-page overviews of the key knowledge and vocabulary associated with a topic)
- Students' recall and retrieval of information is strengthened by explicit links to prior learning, learning in other subjects and existing cultural knowledge.
- We explicitly model and teach the learning skills which we expect our students to use. E.g. listening, team work, instruction key words
- We bring the 'real life applications' of learning into the classroom and emphasise the relevance of the curriculum to current debates.
- Teachers follow the homework policy: tasks are useful, relevant, acknowledged (e.g. by written marking, explicit verbal feedback, House Points, email/ postcard home) and set regularly using Googleclassroom. Briefly:
  - Key Stage 3: English, Maths, Science 30mins-1 hour every week; other subjects 30mins-1 hour every week or fortnight, depending on a student's timetable and the requirements of the curriculum.



- Key Stage 4: All GCSE and other accredited subjects 45-75 minutes a week.
- Key Stage 5: All subjects at least 60 minutes per hour of teaching.

### **Further reading**

Our Homework Policy contains finer details according to subject area and can be found on the Staff Intranet.

Curriculum maps are held within Faculties and can also be found on the school website.

The Sutton Trust's 'What Makes Great Teaching?' is clear about the importance of great subject knowledge and careful instruction.



## Strand 2: Support and access

*Our teachers understand and overcome students' barriers to learning*

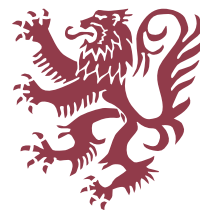
### What is our shared practice?

- We have high expectations of the engagement and attainment for students with SEND, and those in receipt of FSM or PP funding.
- Teachers anticipate barriers to learning and respond with empathy, solutions and support. We recognise that barriers to learning can take many forms, including students' diverse backgrounds, and we seek to provide equality of opportunity and experience.
- Teachers recognise which words students need to know to access their subject and explicitly define and repeat these words, using approaches such as:
  - explaining them verbally
  - using printed glossaries
  - providing definitions on the board and on classroom displays
- Teachers check on the following at the lesson planning and lesson delivery stages:
  - are instructions clear and provided verbally and visually, using steps and chunks? Have we thought about the words used in our instructions and whether images or diagrams would help?
  - is the task design appropriate? Do some students need word banks or sentence stems to help them complete a task?
- We make use of coloured backgrounds for resources (printed and electronic) if this makes texts easier to read for students, especially those with dyslexia.
- We know which students have an SEND profile, have English as an Additional Language and/or a Risk Assessment and we take extra care to check on their understanding of tasks, instructions and texts, especially during the early stages of lessons.
- We take time to read students' SEND profiles and Risk Assessments (which can be found on our Management Information System) and to implement the strategies indicated.

- Teachers work collaboratively with Teaching Assistants: making time to talk with them at suitable times, utilising their knowledge of the students, providing them with direction and guidance for the lesson content/tasks and supporting them to challenge poor behaviour or poor engagement.
- We implement guidance from SEND specialists to support individual students and to strengthen our teaching overall. This may include Communication and Interaction Workers, Speech and Language Therapists, Play Therapists and Educational Psychologists
- Teachers contact the SEND and/or EAL department for expert advice and guidance if they are teaching students with more challenging needs and work proactively with Teaching Assistants to support named students.
- Teachers also contact the SEND department for further assessment if they believe a student has an undiagnosed need or requirements for exams access arrangements.
- We adhere to exams access arrangements and liaise with the Exams Office where necessary. This includes giving students extra time for assessments and allowing access to laptops.

### **Further reading**

'DyslexiaLand' by Cheri Rae provides a useful insight to the needs of students and staff with dyslexia.



*Think for yourself,  
act for others*

## Strand 3: Success and achievement

*Our teachers support students' achievement by modelling, effective task setting and recognising success*

### What is our shared practice?

- Lessons are well-paced and support students to concentrate and to complete successful work. This is supported by a focus on what the key learning is which then ensures that the most time is spent on that learning.
- Teachers are confident about planning lessons which challenge students and keep them in a development 'zone', rather than providing tasks which can be completed too easily.
- Tasks are set which address the key learning, are interesting and enable students to work with focus. Tasks are not set just to fill time.
- Students are shown what successful work looks like because teachers use models and success criteria.
- Success criteria and models consider the range of student attainment in a class. For example, we use differentiated criteria when relevant (e.g. categorising criteria under Good and Excellent or Bronze, Silver and Gold).
- Teachers are confident to model 'live', including explaining thought processes and editing and amending processes to students so they understand how successful work is achieved.
- Task setting also considers the range of attainment in the class. Higher attaining students are stretched and challenged through:
  - demanding success criteria
  - higher-order questioning
  - appropriate texts and resources
  - opportunities for independent work
- Students are directed to work independently, as a whole class, in groups or in pairs. If group and paired work is used, this is because it is intended to have a direct impact on student progress. Effective approaches include:
  - making clear teacher expectations of the quantity of work to be completed
  - students given specific tasks to complete or roles to play



- giving explicit timings and instructions to which students can return or be directed towards
- Periods of independent and silent work are used in most lessons to enable students to focus and achieve. Teachers insist on silent working when it is part of the planned lesson.
- Teachers find opportunities to enable students to achieve in their lessons and to receive praise and motivation for doing so. We give House Points and make home contact (e.g. postcards or emails home) when students have accomplished something or met a goal. This also helps to build the self-esteem of our most vulnerable students.
- We explain to classes the purpose and value of any activity set. We ensure that students are not passive and are always expected to be actively engaged - e.g. by taking notes when others speak, by correcting and adding to their answers when an exercise is taken up.

### **Further reading**

Rosenshine's 'Principles of Instruction' provide an interesting overview of the importance of enabling students to achieve success.

Teachers can also find scripts to support silent work and on-topic paired work on the Intranet.

## Strand 4: Assessment (AFL) and adjustment

*Our teachers know how to assess students' progress and how to adjust their teaching accordingly*

### What is our shared practice?

- Students' understanding is assessed as part of an ongoing process:
- Teachers share the intended outcome of the lesson (learning objectives). These can consider skills and knowledge.
  - Knowledge and information is shared with students (explanations, examples, texts, models)
  - Tasks are set which enable students to practise and absorb new knowledge and information
  - During this process teachers make use of the following in order to determine how much of the new knowledge and information students have understood before they move on:
    - Listen • Observe • Question • Read
- Having reviewed students' understanding, teachers adjust subsequent activities and instructions. Adjustments may include:
  - Providing further examples and explanations for individuals or small groups
  - Including more live modelling with talk-throughs of the teacher's thought process
  - Re-teaching a topic to the whole class where this is appropriate and possible
  - Re-phrasing explanations and providing further support for new vocabulary
  - Using diagrams or pictures to add clarity or present information in a different or repeated way
  - Setting homework which addresses a gap or misconception
- When questioning, hands-down questioning is the norm and teachers give clear thinking time. All students are expected to think about the questions that are asked and 'lolly sticks' and random name generators can be helpful for broad questioning and to encourage active listening and thought.
- More specific, planned or considered questions (which take into account students' levels of understanding) should be directed at named students. A hierarchy of questions can be particularly useful.

### Further reading

'Inside the Black Box: Raising Standards through Classroom Assessment' (1998) by Paul Black and Dylan Wiliam is the seminal text for approaches to ongoing assessment in the classroom. You can also watch The Classroom Experiment on YouTube.

## Strand 5: Feedback and progress

*Our teachers provide feedback which has an impact on students' progress*

### What is our shared practice?

- Teachers' written feedback follows the frequency set out in our more detailed Marking and Assessment Policy. In brief:
  - KS3 and 4 Core subjects, KS4 Options subjects and KS3 Humanities, Modern Languages, EAL and Latin: students receive written feedback at least twice per short term. This is usually in response to a mid- and end of unit assessment. KS3 Creative Arts, Design Technology and Computing: students receive written feedback at least once per short term. KS5 all subjects: Students receive written feedback on average twice or three times a term.
- Teachers' written feedback can be handwritten or typed and printed or given on Googleclassroom where an assessment has been completed electronically. It indicates:
  - Strengths (which are specific to the task and unit being assessed); Targets (which are specific to the task and unit being assessed); Opportunity to improve (a task or activity which will develop a skill or correct a misconception)
- Green pen is used for teachers' or teaching assistants' comments; students use purple pen to make improvements; teachers and teaching assistants use orange highlighter to show literacy errors which are then corrected ('live' during the lesson, especially with classes which contain more students who struggle with literacy, and also for work which is marked outside lesson time)
- DIRT time/ structured time for improving work in class is built in to ensure that students engage with and benefit from teacher feedback. Where feedback has been given on Googleclassroom, teachers should ensure that students are able to access and respond to it during structured lesson time for improving work.
- There is no need for 'tick and flick' marking of students' books: teachers should focus on good quality feedback which supports students' understanding and progress.



- In addition to regular written feedback, structured self-assessment, peer-assessment and verbal feedback are recognised as valuable methods of identifying a student's strengths and identifying the next steps to take in order to make progress.
- Teachers can make use of mail merge, marking codes and whole class feedback sheets to support a manageable workload. The key point is that students understand where they have strengths, where they need to improve and how they can approach improving their work and understanding.
- Phrases to avoid include "Try to complete more in the time available." and "This is incomplete." If teachers have concerns about a student's focus and completion of work, they discuss this with the student and make home contact. If teachers have concerns about a student's understanding or level of need, they discuss this with SEND staff and the relevant Head of Student progress. Giving supportive advice and feedback about how to manage time, for example in exams, is good practice.

### Further reading

Our Marking, Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy contains finer details according to subject area and can be found on the Staff Intranet.



# Routines

## First Five, Last Five

### First Five

1. Meet and greet students at the door
2. Students enter calmly
3. Students get ready to learn (uniform, equipment)
4. Silent DNA in every lesson
5. Take the register

### Last Five

1. Tidy up
2. Return resources
3. Tuck away chair
4. Wait for dismissal
5. Leave calmly

### Tips and hints

- Being consistent with our First Five, Last Five expectations is especially supportive of staff who are new to the school or to teaching.
- Teachers may use the standard First Five, Last Five slides (available on the Intranet) to reinforce these expectations if they wish.
- A silent DNA is the norm as it enables teachers to set up their lesson, establish a calm environment and address any issues. There may be times when teachers want or need students to complete a DNA which is not silent and this amended expectation needs to be made clear to students. DNAs may need to be carefully differentiated to ensure that all students are able to access the task and begin promptly.

## Taking the register

- The register must be taken promptly and in every lesson
- Teachers call a formal register, using "Good morning, Hassan" and students respond using the teacher's name: "Good Morning, Mrs Smith".

### Tips and hints

Staff will need to make the formal register expectation clear at the start of terms. The reasons for taking a formal register are:

- to ensure that all students know their teachers' names
- to emphasise the importance of good manners and respectful relationships
- to strengthen our consistent approach to each lesson, therefore supporting colleagues

## Seating Plans

A seating plan is created for every class. This is shared centrally and amended when there are changes. The seating plan should indicate PP/ SEND status. Seating plans can be accessed by the Cover Team should a teacher be absent. When teachers are designing their seating plan, they consider:

- Which students need to be near to the front to support focus or to meet a learning need (e.g. hearing difficulties or literacy difficulties);

- Which pairings or groupings of students are most effective;
- Whether or not friendship or gender groupings will support or hinder student progress.
- Asking colleagues for advice if they have students they have not taught before.
- Being prepared to amend their seating plan if it is not effective.

### **Tips and hints**

A very simple way of creating a seating plan is to create and re-use a multi-rowed table in a Word or Google document. Our Management Information System also allows staff to create and share seating plans.

### **Student resources, exercise and reading books**

All students are expected to have basic 'pencil case' equipment such as a black pen, a pencil and a ruler. Year teams have spare supplies for those in need. Students write in black or blue pen unless directed otherwise and dates and titles are underlined with a ruler. There is no requirement to write down Learning Objectives.

Students should take care of their own exercise books, bringing them to and from each lesson. There should be no doodles on the front of exercise books or inside exercise books and any book cover decoration should be done under the direction of the teacher. Teachers reinforce the importance of clear and careful presentation and challenge scruffy and doodled books. Teachers explain how to use an exercise book as a revision tool and can use resources on the Intranet to support this.

All students are expected to have a reading book at all times. Our Librarian supports students to find books which interest them and match their reading abilities. Students can be encouraged to read quietly as part of their DNA activities to enable teachers to set up their lessons.

### **Tips and hints**

Teachers can liaise with our Librarian should a student not have a reading book and she will contact the student to support them.

The staff Intranet also holds resources developed by one of our Working Parties to support teachers and students with organisation and set-up of exercise books.

### **Cover work**

Planned Cover is placed on the relevant Googleclassroom. The usual considerations around students' ability to access and understand resources, vocabulary and instructions apply to cover work. This is even more important for cover lessons when non-subject specialists may be leading the lesson. Teachers covering lessons remember that all students will have a reading book that they can use while they review the materials for the lesson.

### **Tips and hints**

Quizzes, reading comprehensions, accessible text book work and documentaries with focused questions/ note-taking topics can all work well as Cover tasks. Setting a small range of tasks, as in a normal lesson, is just as appropriate for Cover lessons.



# Technology and Googleclassroom

## What is our shared practice?

- Every class has a Googleclassroom.
- At the start of term (or when a class rotates or a member of staff joins mid-year), the Classroom Codes should be shared with all students in the class.
- Classroom Codes are shared centrally at the start of every term and placed on the school website.
- Teachers monitor and ensure that all students have joined the Googleclassroom.
- Teachers who share a class should share a Googleclassroom unless the division of topics means that separate Googleclassrooms are more sensible.
- Lesson resources should be shared on the Googleclassroom to support absent students to catch up on missed content.
- From September 2021, all homework is to be set on Googleclassroom. Teachers use the 'Assignment' function, set a clear and dated deadline and use the word 'Homework' at the start of the assignment to make it distinct from other kinds of task. Homework tasks will then appear on students' Googlecalendars which can be accessed from their RM Unify homepage.
- Students working from home or ASC (either flexi-schoolers or agreed with Year Teams) can join lessons online using the Googlemeet link that appears at the top of each Googleclassroom and/or access work posted on Googleclassroom.
- Some Faculties make effective use of other online resources and platforms such as MyMaths, Memrise and Educake. These can be particularly useful in developing students retention and recall skills and can also be effective methods of setting meaningful homework which supports progress rather than filling time.

## Further reading

The Staff Googledrive contains 'How To' videos and written guidance for those who are new to Googleclassroom or looking to develop more expert use.

## CPD, support and quality assurance

### What is our shared practice?

#### For all teachers

- Regular subject/ faculty meetings have a focus on good practice in each subject area and are carefully planned by Heads of Faculty to meet faculty development needs.
- Termly Whole School CPD sessions focus on our five Teaching and Learning strands.
- Termly opt-in small group CPD sessions enable further exploration of the five Teaching and Learning strands, RFL development and leadership and management skills, including reading groups and working parties. The opt-in sessions enable staff at different career stages to receive CPD which supports them to continually improve and refine their practice.
- Assigned support is available for individuals looking to improve or experiment with an aspect of Teaching and Learning. This can take place over a short or longer period of time and may involve focused observations and feedback, the opportunity to observe colleagues externally and internally and focused and supportive discussions.
- Relevant external CPD, e.g. exam board training sessions. Any member of staff can apply to undertake relevant external training by completing the form on the Intranet, gaining the agreement of their Line Manager in advance and submitting the request to [training@cheney.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:training@cheney.oxon.sch.uk). All requests are considered against staff and school development needs, cover implications and budget availability.
- All teachers are able to apply for part-funded Masters and/or Action Research projects. We work most often with the University of Oxford's Department of Education but are happy to consider expressions of interest in further education and research with other providers.
- Those teaching out of specialism are also supported by the provision and sharing of teaching resources, observations and feedback from subject specialists and funding for relevant external CPD.

### **For Early Careers Teachers**

- All Early Careers Teachers take part in further termly CPD sessions designed particularly for the needs of those new to teaching. We take part in the OTSA Early Careers Teachers provision which enables teachers from across the city to work together in the early days of their teaching careers.
- All Early Careers Teachers are also assigned an expert Mentor and receive a reduced timetable.

### **For Middle and Senior Leaders**

- All potential and existing Middle and Senior Leaders can apply annually for part or fully-funded Middle and Senior Leadership courses, including OTSA Exploring Middle Leadership, OTSA Middle Leadership and the NPQH.
- Our internal opt-in CPD sessions also include a Leadership and Management strand each term.
- We are increasingly supporting Apprenticeship Levy-supported Masters programmes, including Masters in Education Management.

All applications for external CPD follow the procedure outlined above.





### **Lesson observations, learning walks and work scrutiny (in brief)**

All Quality Assurance processes have the same aims: to identify and share good practice and to identify and address areas for development so that our students receive the best possible outcomes and our staff are well-supported and skilled practitioners. Quality Assurance is not about making any staff or students feel uncomfortable or labelled.

- All non-ECT teachers are entitled to three lesson observations and feedback a year, linked to their Performance Management Teaching and Learning targets. Lesson observations are designed to be supportive and developmental rather than judgmental or intimidating. The specific focus of the lesson observation is agreed in advance. Feedback forms and further guidance are available on the Intranet.
- Early Careers Teachers follow the ECT framework requirements for observations and feedback over the course of their two-year ECT period.
- Short learning walks and feedback take place during the year, with a focus on school priorities and the five Teaching and Learning strands. Feedback forms and further guidance are available on the Intranet.
- Work scrutiny takes place each term and provides an opportunity to share best practice, see and understand work being produced by students across different subject areas and identify areas for whole-school and subject-specific development. Work scrutiny is conducted by Middle and Senior leaders although any interested member of staff may take part.



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Cheney Lane, Headington, Oxford OX3 7QH