



Teaching & Learning Policy

Introduction

This policy replaces any previous policy and follows the DfE regulations. All members of staff are affected by and expected to adhere to this policy.

In line with the College's Equal Opportunities and Special Educational Needs policies, we aim to give all students equal opportunities to take part in all aspects of college life, as far as is appropriate, practicable and compatible with giving regard to health and safety and the efficient education of other students.

This policy takes into account our aim for children to have the support they need under Every Child Matters:

- to be healthy
- to stay safe
- to enjoy and achieve
- to make a positive contribution
- to achieve economic well-being

The policy will follow the five principles of the Children's Plan:

- to support parents and families
- to allow children to reach their full potential
- to enable children to enjoy their childhood whilst preparing for adult life
- to provide services in response to children and family needs
- to use preventative measures to help students avoid the possibility of failure

This policy is founded in the College's commitment to the development and maintenance of good behaviour and a positive and inclusive ethos for all members of the College community. It reflects the College's commitment to encourage and reflect diversity in all aspects of College life.

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Foreword

Rooks Heath College is a mixed 11 to 18 multicultural comprehensive in the London Borough of Harrow. Years 12 and 13 are attached to the college as part of the Harrow College Consortium and this policy also applies to any activities organised for them, although there are extra regulations in place to comply with Harrow College's rules. This policy is formulated by the Senior Leadership team, in consultation with staff and is monitored by members of the college's Chair of Governors Group. The policy is subject to review every 3 years and is subject to approval by the Governors of the College.

"It turns out that as long as you go to school (and that's important), then it doesn't matter very much which school you go to, but it matters very much which classroom you sit in"

(Dylan William 2011)

Principles of the Policy:

We recognise that all students/children possess unique skills, abilities and aptitudes and all have an entitlement to access a broad, challenging and appropriate curriculum. Every student is also entitled to experience a variety of teaching and learning styles which enable them to achieve their full potential. Rooks Heath College aims, through successful teaching and learning, to develop the whole child and to enable our students to make good progress and become lifelong learners.

All teachers have a responsibility to plan and deliver lessons where teaching and learning is of the highest quality, with effective Pace & Challenge in all lessons and where the learning needs of all students/children are met.

We are committed to *"Opportunity through learning"*.

SEN Statement

While the principles and aims of this policy apply to all children it is recognised that aspects may be amended for young children with specific learning needs.

Aims of the Policy:

1. To ensure high quality teaching and learning experiences for students of all abilities and aptitudes.
2. To provide a framework for teaching and learning within which there is flexibility and scope for creativity.
3. To provide coherence of approach and consistency of expectation.
4. To make explicit the entitlement of all students/children.
5. To promote the core values of RHC.
6. To raise attainment by increasing levels of student motivation, participation and independence.
7. To promote reflection on, and sharing of, good practice; through a variety of methods, including Coaching, Peer observations and collaborative Dept. CPD.
8. To promote an understanding of how learning takes place, with embedded CPD on up to date pedagogy for teachers.
9. To make explicit a baseline for monitoring and evaluating the teaching and learning that takes place.
10. To provide practical guidance and clear procedures.
11. To provide a focus for development.

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12. To inform teachers, students/children, parents, Governors and the wider community about the aims and processes of teaching and learning.
13. To identify specific areas of responsibility at whole school, at Departmental and individual staff level.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Governors

To ensure the effective and rigorous implementation and monitoring of the policy.

Leadership Team:

1. To provide appropriate support, training and resources for subject areas and individual staff.
2. To monitor and evaluate the delivery and impact of the policy.
3. To modify and update the policy in the light of ongoing developments and the changing needs of the school and its priorities.

Heads of Year Groups, Heads of Department, Subject Leaders:

1. To be responsible for the co-ordination of long, medium and short term planning of schemes of learning, taking into consideration the aims and objectives of the policy.
2. To monitor and evaluate consistent delivery of the policy at Departmental and subject level.
3. To provide appropriate support to team members by providing training materials or advice and guidance.
4. Support staff to take risks in new teaching methods.
5. To deliver Departmental CPD in line with the schools T&L Action Plan/SEF.

Teaching staff:

1. To ensure that their own teaching meets the national Teachers Standards; ensuring teaching and learning is at least consistently Good in all areas.
2. To implement this policy by planning and delivering high quality learning experiences.
3. To have a growth mind set, be willing to take risks.
4. Actively seek to reflect on their practice using strategies like Marginal Learning Gains, IRIS technology and/or other strategies as appropriate.
5. Work collaboratively with colleagues to share best practice and improve teaching.

All staff: To be aware of the principles of the policy and how they can contribute to it.

Students/children:

1. To work positively within lessons to enable staff to implement the policy effectively.
2. To engage with learning experiences outside the classroom by ensuring completion of the learning tasks set as homework.

Those with parental responsibility:

To support the policy of the School, in line with the Home-School Agreement, by providing support for students/children at home, allowing them to continue to develop their learning effectively.

Definition of Teaching:

The purpose of teaching is to promote learning and to raise standards of achievement. Teaching includes the whole range of activities that a teacher employs to promote learning and progress. This includes:

1. Use of expert subject knowledge and general knowledge of current affairs.
2. Planning of individual lessons and series of lessons to ensure all learners are challenged.
3. Having consistently high expectations of all students/children.
4. Implementing varied learning activities.
5. SMART lesson objectives must be shared with students/children in every lesson.
6. Lessons are objective led and outcome driven.
7. Students/children must be made aware of the success criteria they are working towards.
8. Effective use of differentiation to ensure that the needs of all learners are met so that they make good progress relative to their starting points.
9. There is a quick start to the lesson with an engaging starter activity, ensuring learning is evident.
10. The pace of the lesson allows all students/children to make progress.
11. Setting challenging and purposeful homework.
12. Marking, feedback (oral and written) formative and summative assessment and reporting.
13. Teaching and reading, literacy and numeracy.
14. Establishing a positive climate for learning in lessons to encourage interest and engagement.
15. Ensuring high standards of Behaviour for Learning.
16. Providing intervention when underachievement is evident.

Definition of Learning:

Learning is the process by which an individual makes sense of new experience. Learning takes place when the individual constructs their own knowledge and understanding of a subject, skill or values. Learning often takes place through personal interaction; therefore, we believe that it is important to promote activities that allow the learner to work with others to solve problems, to explore concepts and to develop language as a means of learning and a tool for thinking.

We believe learning will most effectively take place when:

1. The learning environment is secure, stable and stimulating.
2. Relationships between teachers and students/children are positive and respectful.
3. Students/children' self-esteem is high.
4. Students/children understand the purpose of the learning and see relevance to their own experience.
5. Students/children understand the ways in which learning takes place.
6. The learning builds on prior knowledge and understanding.
7. Success criteria are explicit and models are provided.

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8. The learning is active and collaborative.
9. Student questioning, reflection, and discussion are encouraged to extend & guide discovery.
10. Independent learning and thinking is facilitated and encouraged.
11. There are opportunities for creativity and utilising different learning styles.
12. Students/children can self-assess, know what they need to do to improve and are able to set appropriate targets.
13. Students/children have opportunities to transfer skills, knowledge and understanding to other contexts.

Definition of Progress:

To make progress in learning is to move forward towards a learning objective or an agreed target.

All students/children are expected to make clear progress in their learning over time as follows:

Performance data collated throughout the year shows that students/children are making good progress towards their agreed targets; in line with their starting points.

The quality of work produced by students/children shows that they are acquiring knowledge quickly, developing their understanding and skills and consolidates this in line with expectations for their age group and national averages;

Students/children develop and apply skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics so that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment;

Students/children can transfer their learning and apply this knowledge, skills and experience across other curriculum areas.

Where students/children' prior attainment is low or falls below that of all students/children nationally, the gap is closing over time.

Expectations:

This section of the policy reflects our expectation that students/children enjoy the highest quality of teaching and learning at Rooks Heath College. In order to achieve this aim, we need to establish a shared understanding of what constitutes a good or outstanding lesson.

The 'Aspects of Effective Teaching and Learning' document outlined in Appendix 1 is provided to suggest good practice. It is not expected to be an exhaustive list or a 'recipe' for a good lesson. In the document, expectations of students/children are also made explicit. Finally, the importance of effective Pace & Challenge and good practice in Assessment for Learning is also emphasised.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD):

Teachers have a responsibility to reflect on their practice, enhance and update their professional knowledge and skills. This is to ensure that consistently high standards of teaching and learning are maintained and national Teacher Standards are met. Rooks Heath Colleges' CPD programme will provide opportunities for staff to participate in a variety of activities in order to support the individual professional needs of staff and build whole school capacity. These CPD activities include strategies such as the importance of Memory and Cognitive Overload, SOLO Taxonomy presentations and sessions by current staff and outside trainers, Departmental (Collaborative) CPD each half term, peer observation, professional discussions, coaching and mentoring.

Monitoring and Review:

Middle Leaders, Senior Leaders, Directors of Learning and Heads of Department will ensure that they monitor and review the quality of teaching and learning on a regular basis and in a number of ways.

1. Book scrutinies.
2. Learning walks.
3. Lesson Observations - drop ins & Performance Appraisal Observations.
4. Questionnaires/Surveys with staff/students/children/parents.
5. Examination reviews and progress checks.
6. Reviews conducted alongside external agencies.
7. Student/child interviews.

The outcomes of monitoring and reviews will be shared with staff in an open and professional manner. Where standards of teaching and/or learning fall below expectations, appropriate support will be given and further monitoring will take place as appropriate. If concerns continue, further action will be taken in line with the Performance Appraisal and Capability Policy.

Aspects of Effective Teaching and Learning

Lesson Structure:

Planning and preparation

1. Lessons are planned with clear aims and learning objectives, structure and challenge for all students/children using SMART.
2. Where objectives are differentiated it is clear to the students, and choice is used to help students motivate themselves to improve.
3. SMART targets must be shared with students/children in every lesson.
4. Students/children must be made aware of the success criteria they are working towards the expected outcome.
5. Learning environment is stimulating, relevant and informative.
6. Lessons are planned to develop metacognition skills.
7. Lesson objectives are clearly linked to departmental long and medium term plans which are periodically reviewed.
8. Planning is linked with short, medium and long-term assessment opportunities.
9. Planning allows for a variety of learning styles and provides opportunities for developing a wide range of thinking skills.
10. Teachers make use of all available information, both statistical and personal, to set clear, realistic, yet challenging targets and to plan differentiated learning opportunities.
11. Lessons are planned to build on prior learning and ensure continuity and progression.
12. Opportunities for developing literacy, numeracy, SMSC, ICT skills and cross-curricular elements are integrated into lesson plans wherever possible.
13. Planning makes provision for the effective use of TAs when available.

Start of the Lesson

1. The teacher uses effective strategies to 'Meet and Greet' students/children on arrival.
2. The start of the lesson has a clear focus, using activities which immediately engage the learner.
3. The expected learning outcomes are shared with students/children (not always necessarily at the start), in the context of prior learning, to ensure they understand what they are doing and why.
4. The success criteria by which the learning will be evaluated are made explicit.
5. The teacher establishes and communicates clear expectations for behaviour.

Lesson Development

1. The teacher presents lesson activities with clarity, enthusiasm and pace, ensuring timings are considered but adapted should the lesson require it.
2. Active learning is promoted by provision of tasks which enable students/children to make meaning, construct knowledge and develop understanding and skills.

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3. The teacher and/or other students/children model activities and processes, making their thinking and decision-making explicit to students/children.
4. Exemplar work/perfect model is provided and/or demonstrated so that students/children are aware of the sophistication of response expected.
5. Appropriate differentiated resources/teaching approaches/learning activities support students/children' learning. To enable success for every student, tasks are accessible to all.
6. As the lesson proceeds, learning activities are organised into chunks or stepping stones in order to maintain student engagement and support progress towards expected outcomes.
7. Open question techniques used to probe and develop students/children' understanding.
8. Active listening is promoted, inviting a range of different responses and building in time for reflection.
9. Constructive, relevant assessment and feedback is provided on progress; highest impact on student/child progress.
10. Students/children are encouraged to evaluate and refine their work in order to meet targeted levels of attainment.
11. Activities ensure progression in student learning by increasing the level of conceptual challenge, the depth of understanding and the breadth of application of skills.
12. Groupings and seating arrangements are varied according to the task.
13. Teachers demonstrate flexibility in their approach and be prepared to deviate from the lesson plan where appropriate.
14. A variety of homework tasks are set to deepen, extend, or initiate learning.

End of the Lesson

1. The teacher creates the time to review lesson objectives and learning outcomes.
2. Students/children have the opportunity to assess their own progress and set themselves appropriate targets (not always necessarily done at the end).
3. Students/children receive supportive feedback from the teacher or their peers where appropriate.
4. Opportunities are provided to celebrate success.
5. Links are made to future lessons, learning activities and assessment opportunities as appropriate.
6. The end of the lesson is prompt and orderly, allowing for efficient transition between lessons.

Expectations of students/children:

1. To be engaged and not passive in their learning.
2. To work effectively and purposefully in a range of contexts.
3. To come fully equipped and prepared to maximise the learning opportunity.
4. To be prepared to share their learning and ideas in an atmosphere of trust.
5. To ask questions where appropriate – of each other and the teacher.
6. To support one another, working collaboratively, recognising the contributions of all.

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7. To undertake self-assessment or peer assessment with some confidence, becoming increasingly able to apply the criteria for success and to set appropriate targets for improvement.
8. To know where to go for help and recognise that further progress can always be made.
9. To develop resilience in approaching problems and new learning challenges.
10. To be able to select appropriate learning resources to help develop their own learning.
11. To work with increasing independence, developing the skills to become life-long learners.
12. To make effective use of ICT to develop their learning, accessing a wide variety of sources and using appropriate methods to present their work.
13. To act on all assessment, marking and feedback.
14. To use initiative and develop more independent learning.

Embedding Pace & Challenge:

1. Setting high expectations for all students/children in your class.
2. Planning for differentiated lesson outcomes and/or success criteria which are shared with class.
3. Planning for the most and least able; Top – down approach (rising tide lifts all ships).
4. Planning engaging starter activities to ensure quick start to the lesson and learning is evident in the first 5 minutes of the lesson (not just doing the register).
5. Planning for and using a variety of forms of differentiation in your teaching; POSTCARD: Pace, Outcome, Support (or the removal of), Task, Choice, Ability groupings, Resource, Dialogue.
6. Planning for higher order dialogue; extending, explaining vocabulary varying the questioning and thinking through the use of blooms taxonomy/SOLO.
7. Depth; for example, extension through complexity.
8. Breadth; for example, enrichment through a broader range of tasks and resources
9. Promoting independence in thinking and learning as well as providing opportunities to self- regulate learning.
10. Using accelerated or an appropriate pace of learning.
11. Share expected timings for activities and give time checks.
12. Setting differentiated homework which is challenging for all students/children.
13. Using learning conversations between the learner and teacher to inform the student of their progress.
14. Overall confidence in planning and delivering lessons with pace & challenge embedded.

Assessment for Learning:

1. Students/children receive regular developmental and motivational feedback in a variety of ways to enable them to progress.
2. Feedback will sometimes include quality written comments which recognise the strengths of a piece of work and identify targets for improvement in a constructive, personalised way in line with marking & feedback policy either of the College or Department.

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3. Students/children are able to act upon the advice they are given to improve their performance providing a response to the feedback they are provided with.
4. All students/children are aware of their Flightpaths and Target levels/grades. These are also displayed on trackers inside their books, and updated termly.
5. Frequent opportunities are taken within lessons to provide immediate verbal/live feedback.
6. Students/children are encouraged to judge the success of their own work, negotiate success criteria and set themselves targets for their own improvement.
7. The language of subject progress is shared with students/children.
8. Students/children are made aware of the criteria for progression between levels or grades and are enabled to interpret these criteria in a meaningful way.
9. Students/children are encouraged to critically, but supportively, judge the performance of others within their group.
10. Levels of work are modelled through display and explanation.
11. Within subject areas, there will be opportunities for marking to be standardised across a year group.