TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

The application of this policy and procedure ensures that no employee receives less favourable treatment on grounds of sex, trans-gender status, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marital status, civil partnership status, age, race, colour, nationality, national origin, ethnic origin, disability, part time status or trade union activities.

POLICY AGREED BY _____   DATE _____

POLICY REVIEW DATE _____

VERSION 1:28/11/2014

1

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

VISION: <u>OUR VISION FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE</u>

Buxton School is committed to the principle of personalised learning and to the development within our pupils of the skills that will enable them to become lifelong learners. We believe that it is the relationship between teachers and pupils, in whatever setting, as motivator, guide and role model, which will help to achieve this.

It is our core vision that maximizing the effectiveness of these relationships will be the key driver in raising standards and achievement. During their time at our School, our young people will achieve their full potential, physically, socially, emotionally, morally and academically. They will be literate, numerate and self-confident and have key skills to aid them in problem solving, teamwork and co-operating with others.

They will leave our School as confident young adults ready to fulfil their responsibility in society.

POLICY STATEMENT AND PROCEDURE

The School aims and objectives guide the members of the School community towards achieving **"inspired T&L"**. Teaching and learning will permeate all that we do in School. This policy will help ensure that we can deliver our aims for teaching and learning.

RATIONALE

We aim to:

1. empower teachers with a variety of planning and pedagogical models with which lessons are planned in order to maximise learning

2. provide common criteria against which excellent teaching and learning practice can be celebrated and develop that which is not, toward excellence

3. ensure a common high quality of experience for all students to help maximise each individual's potential, whilst supporting creativity and individuality within teaching and learning (teachers and students)

4. help spread and share all teaching and learning practice that is of an excellent standard

5. provide an insight into the review and development of current and future teaching and learning practice, which enables staff and students to remain stimulated and focussed.

Quality Teaching:

- provides carefully structured activity matched sensitively to student needs
- gives students some responsibility for their work and independence
- develops well planned, prepared and paced lessons that maintain high levels of interaction with the class
- provides ample, challenging work
- uses data to differentiate according to need
- maintains high levels of student involvement in tasks
- creates a positive atmosphere in the classroom through excellent relationships
- incorporates high levels of praise and encouragement
- uses a variety of approaches; strategies and techniques are well selected and time is used productively
- uses homework effectively; particularly to reinforce and extend what is learned in School

Quality Learning is:

- when students are <u>captivated and enthused</u> by what they are learning
- an active process – a product of 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 cooperation, 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 their learning
- where learners make considerably better progress than may be expected

OUR MAIN AIM: TO MAXIMISE EVERY LEARNER'S POTENTIAL

We also will strive to:

- Set high expectations for pupils and staff at Buxton School
- Communicate optimism by using positive language and designing challenging tasks
- Demonstrate a commitment to every learner's success, making him or her feel included, secure and valued
- Create an environment where learners feel able to make mistakes and comfortable to learn from them, without feeling inadequate or foolish
- Create opportunities for learners to develop personal qualities such as considerate behaviour and positive and tolerant attitudes that will enable them to contribute effectively to the community
- Set high expectations of learners at home – engaging parents in their child's learning in partnership with the School. Parental involvement and support in the home is critically important
- Provide a clear moral code as a basis of behaviour which is promoted consistently through all aspects of the School that will enable pupils to be role models within the wider community
- Promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Create a 'high challenge-low stress' environment for learning in which students are relaxed, believe that they can learn (high self-esteem) and want to learn (motivated)
- Create opportunities for students to enjoy themselves or have fun: this is when students learn best, because their emotional state is fundamental to learning.

ELEMENTS IN PRACTICE

All lessons should contain the following elements listed below in some shape or form. These strategies are most important to empower us to consistently deliver high quality lessons. In so doing we believe these elements are core to enable us to unlock a student's full potential and hence maximise their progress and level of attainment.

Bloom's Learning Objectives and success criteria are identified and shared along with 'keywords'

This needs to be a two-step approach in which students are told not only the purpose of the lesson but also what the teacher expects in terms of outcomes from activity. There is a need to communicate why they are doing what they are doing and how it fits into the bigger picture of the subject or their wider learning across the curriculum.

This might be achieved through:

- Keywords given, used and applied
- the learning objectives being outlined to the students at or near to the beginning of each lesson
- pupils being asked to identify LO's through enquiry based activities
- LO's & success criteria should be informed by Bloom's verbs. This will reflect effective planning and levels of challenge ie:
  1. Knowing / remembering. understanding
  2. Applying
  3. Analysing
  4. Evaluating
  5. Creating

A combination of at least three of these ought to be included in lessons, in order to drive a variety of activity. This will give students some consistency across all learning areas.

All staff who have undertaken either OTP or ITP training will be expected to demonstrate impact of this on their practice through the implementation of strategies using the DRICE model. The school will commit to training as many staff as possible through the appropriate OLEVI programme (in-house) to further improve pedagogical understanding, discussion and the delivery of high quality learning.

Review Learning to Link and Consolidate using plenaries and mini-plenaries

Plenaries / review help create links with previous learning. This helps build secure foundations for subsequent learning, so that learners can progressively develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, attitudes and values contained in the curriculum. An effective lesson should be organised into a sequence of learning **episodes** with a beginning (teacher or student input), a middle (activity for students) and then a check for understanding before moving to the next episode. At the end of the lesson there might be a longer review time (plenary).
Students remember more from the beginning of a learning activity than they do from the middle. They also learn more from the end of the experience than they do from the middle. Therefore it follows that it is beneficial to create many beginnings and endings in a lesson and review should be part of these beginnings and endings.
This might be achieved through:

- previous learning being reviewed by the teacher
- students being involved in the recap of previous learning
- recap of learning being done at various and appropriate points in a lesson, in relation to learning objectives. So establishing what learners know, understand, can do, are aware of or have explored, correcting existing misconceptions where necessary
- establishing what learners don't know or would like / need to know / learn ie 'What don't we know?' is a powerful question.
- review of learning done toward the end of the lesson, or after a learning episode to consolidate learning and its retention (plenary)

Variety of Learning Activity

The main activity episodes of lessons are critical in making learning an enjoyable and challenging experience. Learning should be stimulated through matching teaching techniques and strategies to the range of learning styles and needs within your class, and indeed groups within that class, to actively engage all students. Initially this should mean that you ensure that you use teaching techniques and strategies that will regularly facilitate the use of all the different learning styles, so as to maximise student's strengths, and develop relative weaknesses.

- It should also involve using student data and assessments to help design different task to meet individual student learning preferences.
- It should provide opportunities for students to show and develop their skills and abilities to work independently and collaboratively.

This might be achieved through:

- Sharing best practice within and between all phases of the school
- being confident, flexible, open minded, willing to take risks, experiment and embrace change in terms of your own teaching style, and adapt appropriately
- planning and delivering a range of activities that match the maturity of the learners and the material to be learned, reflect different learning preferences and involve high levels of time on task for 'making sense' of information.
- using creativity and imagination, and the resources offered by new technology, to engage, enthuse, challenge and support learners, and reward their effort and achievement
- engaging in a dialogue with students that centres on effective learning; what it looks like and how it can be developed
- tasks set in a time context
- the students being aware of the timing in the lesson and of the longer-term deadlines
- activities set in a sequential order that promotes progression and complexity of learning
- assessment having informed the decisions behind which activities are selected and how the students are grouped for them
- students being involved in planning, developing and evaluating their own activity and learning experiences
- activities which are varied in order to access all learning styles and intelligences
- the sequence of tasks that students are engaged in, allowing for appropriate variation in the pace of learning, and the level of challenge.

With more able classes this may actually cap potential though where more open ended tasks set over longer periods of time will allow them to excel. It is essential therefore to remember that variety does not just happen; it needs to be planned according to what best meets the needs of the individuals within your class.

Differentiation to enable all learners to succeed

Differentiation can be seen as an on-going process that is accommodating the needs of individual students in our School. It ensures that teaching allows most learners to make at least their expected progress in relation to their capability. It will also stretch the less able to work as close to their capability as possible and the more able well beyond their perceived capablities. Differentiation is best achieved when based upon an informed review of the student's learning …. therefore through a diagnostic and formative assessment procedure.

Differentiation within classes should therefore take account of your students' baseline, benchmark and minimum target grade that each student has been set in the context of reaching their full potential. Other professional judgements through diagnostic and formative assessment may reshape your initial strategies over time, but this data should remain central to the differentiation you employ for your classes. Modifications, adjustments and alterations can then be made in the following areas:

- learning tasks and activities
- teaching and learning methodologies.

These modifications are made at the SHORT TERM PLANNING stage where the decisions about differentiation are informed by assessment.

This might be achieved:

a. **by TASK:**
Students work in a variety of ways with different strengths and aptitudes, so a range of tasks spanning the spectrum of abilities can be an effective way of differentiating

b. **by RESOURCE:**
Activities which involve resources available to extend the more able as well as support the low achiever. It means changing the resources by which students learn to meet their individual needs. A consideration of the following may be vital in preparation:

- layout, design, graphics and readability of the resource
- using pupil-friendly storage and retrieval systems that will facilitate independent approaches to learning
- training the pupils to use a variety of resources independently (including a study skills programme such as GCSEPOD / Renaissance Reading)
- reducing the dependence on whole class texts as a source for teaching
- variety of mediums ie bigger writing implements, marker pens and poster paper

c. **by RESPONSE:**
The response of the teacher/adult/fellow student is a form by which differentiation can be achieved. This is essential in cases where differentiation by outcome is planned as the teacher's written or spoken response will vary from student to student. Marking of a student's work is an important medium for differentiation by response.

d. **by OUTCOME:**
Students working on a common un-differentiated task will inevitably produce different outcomes to the task set, as long as the task is not too closed. These differentiated outcomes should be *used primarily to assess and then inform our planning for differentiation in another way (task, resource, group, support).*

e. **by GROUP**
Differentiation by group is an important way to allow purposeful use of resources (including the other students in the group). Students could belong to semi-permanent groups within the larger teaching groups. The students will have a record of the groups to which they belong. The students need not necessarily be told how they are grouped other than there ought to be a mixed gender dimension to the groupings where appropriate. All teachers need to actively plan for group work to include collaborative talk activities, problem solving, enquiry and higher order thinking.

f. **by SUPPORT:**
The different needs of the different students will inevitably mean that some students need greater support than others. There are a number of strategies that can provide that support. Using the skills of Learning Support Assistants in the classroom to create a positive environment for learning would most certainly be one if they are available.

These strategies adapt teaching to the potential and needs of each individual, from the more able to those with special educational needs, and as a result create a culture of respect for others and their learning, whatever their gender, social background or ethnic group. We expect to see a number of these different forms of differentiation over a period of time.

6. Assessment used formatively to involve students in their learning: Please refer to the whole school marking policy

PROMOTING AND EVALUATING THE POLICY

This will be achieved and supported by:

- A firm commitment to improving teaching and learning for individuals, departments, the School and the wider community
- The development and improvement of learning and teaching as the central component in the School's and department's development planning cycle
- The use of mechanisms for continuing professional development (ITP / OTP / P4C, coaching, inset, mentoring, training and so on) within the cycle and framework of performance management
- The formal and informal monitoring systems which are already in place, augmented by lesson observation, peer observations, teacher planning, scrutiny, work sampling, canvassing of staff and student views to inform the assessment of the following **outcomes of effective learning**:

   a. More connected knowledge – of things, people, action
   b. Greater complexity of understanding
   c. Wider range of skills and strategies
   d. Increased engagement and motivation
   e. A more reflective and self-directing approach to learning
   f. More positive emotions about and a greater affiliation to learning
   g. A sense of membership and participation in a learning community
   h. A greater facility for interacting and learning with others
   i. The promotion of oneself as a 'lifelong' learner.

Most importantly …

… the fun, sense of achievement and sheer enjoyment that learning brings.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

CLASSROOM TEACHERS

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

This is 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 through individual self-evaluation and through discussion with peers;
- monitoring pupil progress to ensure they achieve well against prior achievement and similar groups nationally;
- self-evaluation of their contribution to the policies and aspirations of the School.

This is 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.

SUBJECT LEADERS

Subject Leaders and phase 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 is achieved by:

- evaluating the teaching of their subject and / or phase, 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, including across phases to avoid repetition;
- 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 and national expectations and other comparative data; setting expectations and targets and implementing actions for the achievement of individual pupils and key groups (eg able pupils, gender groups, C/D pupils);
- monitoring pupils' work by regular sampling of homework, classwork (book checks), 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;
- participating, where applicable, in observing teachers and giving constructive feedback. This will also inform Performance Management of teachers; and
- evaluating progress of teaching and learning targets in departmental development plans, in line with School Improvement Plan.

LEARNING MANAGERS AND HEADOF YEARS

Heads of Years are responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the overall experience of groups and individuals in their year groups.

This is achieved by:

- 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, eg underachievement, able pupils;
- maintaining an overview of the experience of pupils in their year group by eg monitoring the number of detentions, 'use of' G32, cross-curricular activities;
- monitoring the work of tutors and quality of tutor time, eg checking of planners;
- monitoring attitudes to learning through eg attendance and homework planners; and
- reporting back to the Buxton Leadership Team and to staff as requested.

BUXTON LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Senior Leadership Team sets priorities and targets for improvement at whole School level based on evidence gained from monitoring procedures. They track progress made on the School Improvement Plan. Monitoring and evaluation principally takes place through established policies and classroom observations of teaching and learning.

Department Review Meetings

The Senior Leadership Team line managers meet each Subject Leader at least every two weeks with the aim of:

- monitoring the effectiveness of leadership and management of their curriculum area;
- analysing performance data and setting targets for improvement;
- giving support and arranging training for development;
- ensuring quality of standards and verifying judgements of middle leaders; and
- ensuring that meetings take place half-termly with an agenda distributed in advance.

Reviews of Teaching and Learning

A comprehensive review of teaching and learning takes place annually in order to gain a snap shot of standards. On-going reviews take place to focus on particular issues or to support where the need for development has been identified.

The aim is to:

- identify and share good practice;
- evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and progress in line with OFSTED criteria and set targets for improvement;
- track progress on teaching and learning issues identified in the School Improvement Plan;
- identify key aspects of teaching for development by departments and for the whole School;
- identify and support teachers in need of improvement; and
- standardise monitoring procedures including lesson observations and work scrutiny, through paired observations.

-

STUDENTS

Students are responsible for ensuring that they are able to achieve the maximum benefit from the quality of teaching & learning delivered. This is achieved by:

- Ensuring that they have the necessary equipment for all lessons;
- Being punctual;
- Engaging in all activities to the best of their ability;
- Completing all tasks set including homework;
- Showing courtesy and respect to others at all times;
- Adhering to the school's behaviour policy;
- Contributing to the school's T&L policy through engagement in various forums such as School Council and T&L reviews;
- Being aware of and taking ownership for their individual targets and areas for development, and working towards improvement in these areas;
- Contributing to the development of self and others through engagement in regular dialogue with peers and teachers, to include peer and self- assessment;
- To seek clarification in understanding through engagement in appropriate questioning

PARENTS

Parents play a pivotal role in ensuring that pupils achieve the maximum benefit from T&L. This can be achieved by:

- Showing an interest in pupil learning and the life of the school;
- Ensuring that pupils are prepared for learning (equipment / punctuality etc);
- Engaging in learning conversations with pupils. This can include assisting in the completion of homework / reading with pupils / engaging in online or computer based resources such as GCSEPod or Renaissance Reading;
- Maintaining a regular dialogue with school, to include attendance at parents' evenings and school events;
- To be aware of pupil targets and areas for development;
- To provide encouragement, support and praise for pupils and to recognise and support pupil achievement

GOVERNORS

Governors will contribute to the successful implementation of this T&L policy by:

- Having a clear understanding of the scope, aims and limitations of this policy;
- Engaging in regular reviews of this policy to ensure all statutory requirements are met and that the policy remains up to date and relevant;
- Undertaking regular visits to the school, including visits to link departments / phases / yeargroups, and engaging in dialogue with staff in order to both better understand and support the implementation of this policy;
- Liaising with link departments / year groups to arrange 'learning walks' to see how policy transfers into classroom practice;
- Holding stakeholders to account for the successful implementation of this policy through appropriate and informed observation and questioning

10