

Outstanding Teaching, Learning & Assessment Policy

Aim

For the quality of what happens in our classrooms every day to be always good with wide-ranging evidence of outstanding practice

Objectives

1. For teachers to be highly effective in their delivery of well thought through, purposeful, and stimulating lessons in which every student is engaged and clearly making good progress from their varying starting points.
2. For student work to be marked at least fortnightly with incisive feedback about what needs to be done to improve knowledge, understanding and skills.
3. For the drive to improve standards of literacy and numeracy to go across all subjects as well as tutorial sessions and assemblies.
4. For all students to display very good attitudes towards learning by contributing fully to lessons, completing homework to the best of their ability, asking as well as answering questions and responding effectively with the suggestions made by teachers in the marking of their work.
5. Parents receive clear and timely information on how their child is progressing in relation to national expectations and are also given guidance about how to support their child to improve.

Procedures

Governors

- Use Committee Meetings to ask challenging questions of the Headteacher about the quality of performance in this most important area of school.
- Contribute to evaluations taking place during Monitoring Weeks by, visiting classrooms and scrutinizing student work with school leaders as appropriate.
- Be ready to explain the Governors' perception of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to Ofsted and the LA as well as the evidence used to form this judgement.

Headteacher

- Take overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy by:
 - making the School's expectations clear to students, staff and parents alike;
 - supporting the work of the Deputy Heads and other senior leaders;
 - coordinating the input of Governors and school leaders during Monitoring Weeks and making people aware of findings;
 - and identifying and removing any barriers to achieving the right outcomes.
 - Ensuring a common and cohesive understanding of good/outstanding teaching, learning and assessment

Alston Deputy Head

- Ensure that Tutors contribute strongly to the development of positive student attitudes to learning through the academic mentoring role and delivery of the PSHE / Pupil Safety programme.
- Ensure that tutorial sessions play their part in boosting students' literacy & numeracy skills and in monitoring the setting and completion of homework.
- Oversee the Teaching Assistant team, checking that TAs are deployed effectively and impacting positively on student progress and attitudes.

Nenthead Deputy Head

- Lead teaching & learning at NPS including: the planning and delivery of the curriculum; assessment of children's work; the deployment of TAs and their on-going development; and the contribution made by other Federation teachers.
- Contribute to the monitoring of Teaching, Learning & Assessment across the Federation.

Assistant Headteachers

- Lead the development of cross curricular literacy and numeracy.
- Analyse assessment data, considering its accuracy as well as the key messages and potential issues that it

- Identify any students displaying negative attitudes towards their learning and work with them, their teachers, TAs and families to turn them around.
- Monitor overall standards by carrying out learning walks and helping to shape and take part in the activities set up during monitoring weeks.
- Contribute to the leadership of the SKS teachers.

- presents to both individual teachers and schools. Highlight potential concerns to the Headteacher.
- Contribute to the leadership of the teaching teams and the activities set up during monitoring weeks.
 - Support successful transition at 11+ and 16+.

Teachers

Teaching

- Be determined that your students should succeed, and make sure that they know it!
- Model good literacy skills in your own practice.
- Be well prepared. Plan on a half termly basis within a longer term outline. Know your subject content, putting in the ground work to be able to plan well and develop appropriate resources efficiently.
- Plan individual and series of lessons carefully.
 - Introduce subject content progressively, constantly demanding more of students.
 - Make maximum use of lesson time, getting off to a crisp start, managing transitions between activities effectively, coordinating lesson resources well, and ensuring that the end of each lesson reviews what has been learned and signposts next steps.
 - Check students' understanding systematically and effectively in lessons. Identify and support any students falling behind.
 - Provide adequate time for practice to embed students' knowledge, understanding and skills securely.
- Embed reading, writing and communication into your lessons. Plan regular opportunities for extended writing, always insisting upon good presentation.
- Communicate effectively with parents, giving them clear information on their child's progress as well as guidance about how best to support their learning.

Learning

- Let your students in on the secret! They need to know what you are looking for when you mark their work. Getting them to check over and discuss each other's work with reference to your criteria works well too. Use your questioning to further students' understanding of what is required as well.
- Never underestimate the amount and quality of written work to be produced by each of your students. They need to be challenged to write increasingly well. It is essential that pupils' work provides evidence of progress. Do not accept anything other than a pupil's best effort.
- Make sure that children are clear about what they have to do. Allow time for students to record homework, other tasks and deadlines.
- Set challenging homework tasks to suit individual students and expect it to be completed properly and on time, even if this means them completing work with you in school ahead of the deadline. We need to train students to work well independently.
- Make sure that 90% or more of the questions that you ask are directed at particular students. Use this and other techniques to test understanding, maintain student engagement and remind them of what has been covered over the long term.
- Expect and accept nothing less than very good behaviour, applying rewards and sanctions as appropriate and alerting school leaders to any on-going or more serious issues. You are not alone!

Assessment

- Your on-going assessment and marking of children's work needs to be highly effective, so:
 - mark all your students' written work at least fortnightly using green ink or a marking grid at SKS and a pink pen at the primary schools;
 - grade or level the work according to the criteria to which you are working;
 - comment on what is good about their work as well as the areas in which can be improved;
 - give children corrections and/or follow up tasks to do, signposting what needs to be done by either using a pink box or writing; we need to be able to identify that this work has been done properly, so if the work is to be completed outside a pink box, make sure that it is done either in a purple pen or another colour different to the rest of work;
 - SKS teachers need to submit the names of the students following up well on your marking for the Friday assembly reward draw; in the primary schools, follow up work can be used for Headteacher certificates.
- Keep a record of your on-going marking and grades in your Teacher File. Use these grades alongside other tests / assessments you may set when entering data for the half termly Assessment Checkpoints.

- Use the appropriate pro forma to review your termly / half termly Assessment Checkpoint grades and adapt your plans for the coming half term to boost rates of progress for individual and groups of students who have fallen behind the rates required to achieve 'good' progress or better for the year.
- Ensure that all your students really do know how they are progressing towards their targets.

Teaching Assistants

- Know about your students' prior learning (levels / grades) and current rate of progress.
- Know who is PPM, SEN, G&T or has other additional needs and any strategies recommended for them.
- Work closely with your Deputy Head & teachers, checking the specifics of what you are to do & how.
- You will likely be the first to pick up any dip in a child's attitude towards their learning or rate of progress – always share this information.
- Be as encouraging and supportive as you can. By the same token, do not tolerate any nonsense. Share concerns with your Deputy Head & teachers.

Pupils

Teaching

- Teachers are people. Get to know them. Find out how they operate and then work with them. You need to get the best out of each of your teachers. Work out how to do just that.
- Teachers will want to get to know you and the sort of person you are. Be helpful. If you want to get the best out of anyone, show that you want to work with them and help them. It's a team effort.
- Be ready to answer questions. You should find that practically every question in a lesson is 'directed' – aimed at a particular person. At some point or points that person is going to be you.
- Do not see your contact with teachers as confined to lessons. Chat to them at break and/or lunch. Feel able to ask work-related questions at any time. It shows that you want to learn – and it helps learning!

Learning

- Get to your lessons promptly. When you enter the room, settle down quickly, get your Student Planner, books and equipment out, and be ready to start.
- Do not expect learning to be easy. Focus and concentrate in class. When things become challenging, think hard, check your books, ask for help. The harder it is, the more you will have learned once you have worked it out.
- Be organised. Use the Planner or diary to write down homework, other tasks & deadlines. Highlight or cross things out once you have completed them.
- Take a pride in your exercise books. Do not write on the covers. Use the back of the book for planning and thinking. Work neatly in the front, underlining headings and writing in blue or black ink. Label all pictures and diagrams.

Assessment

- Know your targets for each subject and take an interest in your progress towards them. Be determined to make at least 'good' progress. Focus your efforts on achieving this level of success.
- Take on board your teachers' written and verbal feedback, acting upon advice given to speed your progress. Complete all pink box tasks promptly, using a purple pen if you are working outside the pink box.
- Get involved in the assessment process. Think about how work is to be marked before you complete a particular task. Plan your work to match what is required for your target grade.
- Review your own work when asked and contribute sensibly and positively when asked to assess other students' efforts. Students can learn a lot from each other. Make the most of this important resource.
- Take an interest in the assessment checkpoint grades and levels. Read tutor and subject reports carefully and come along to the parents' meetings so that you feel you are at the heart of the partnership between your family and the school. Be ready to discuss targets and to agree the strategies required to achieve them.
- Formative assessment takes place regularly across all three schools. National summative assessments take place in EYFS, Year 1 Phonics, KS1 SATs, Year 4 Times tables, KS2 SATs and GCSEs.

Parents and Carers

- Familiarise yourself with what your son / daughter is working on each half term. You should get an information leaflet detailing what is to be taught at the primary schools as well as what can be done at home. The homework section of the SKS website is invaluable too. In explaining what homework is to be set each week, teachers will also explain what is being covered in class. It just puts you one step ahead of the teenager who says "I haven't got any homework" an enables you to check what they have done.

- Check your youngsters' exercise books. They should be marked at least fortnightly. Teachers should be setting follow up tasks as part of their marking and you should be able to check in the books that this work has been done. It is important as a way of cementing youngsters' knowledge and/or making them think about the next steps. All exercise books should be neat with dates, headings etc. The back of the books is sometimes used for thinking and planning work. Contact us if you have the slightest concern or are not sure about something.
- Feel able to contact your child's teachers. You can do this by appointment or by email, or at the beginning / end of each day at the primary schools.
- Kate Bainbridge is kbainbridge@alston.cumbria.sch.uk .
- Sally Timmons is stimmons@alston.cumbria.sch.uk .
- Read your son / daughter's tutor and Subject Reports carefully and come along to the Parents' Meetings, be ready to ask questions, raise issues and to contribute to deciding appropriate targets as well as the strategies to meet them. Ask for clarification if you do not fully understand the targets set for your child, how they have been set and what they mean. You are an important part of the learning process and we want you to be involved. We also firmly believe that you have a major part to play in your son /daughter's learning and progress as they move up through our schools. We absolutely need your help!