



Learning and Teaching Policy

LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY

Introduction

This policy aims to reflect our school's motto of 'Achievement by All' and its intention to offer the highest quality of teaching and learning, which will equip students for life. This policy is cogent of the nature of the school and its continued pursuit of excellence in all areas of school life. This policy is also set out in line with the expectations placed on all teachers in the National Teachers' Standards.

Aims

1. Although there is no preferred teaching style, all sequences of lessons should be structured around the Learning Cycle and Key features of Effective Learning. Appendix 1
2. Progress is actively planned for and reviewed in every lesson. Effective AFL strategies should be considered. Appendix 3
3. Learning activities are planned to meet the specific needs of individuals and groups of students (including SEND, Pupil premium and the more able) as identified by assessment and other data.
4. Teachers intervene or reshape learning as soon as the need arises.
5. Students receive regular detailed formative assessment feedback, as outlined in the Marking and Assessment. Appendix 2.
6. Behaviour for learning is supported by following the school's cornerstones.
7. Student feedback is valued as a tool for improving learning and teaching.
8. Homework for core subjects at KS3 is set to support learning at least once every week, or more frequently at KS4 and 5. Independent learning projects are set half termly. Appendix 4

Monitoring procedures

The quality of learning and teaching across the school is monitored by SLT, YTL, CTL, post holders and other staff via learning walks, lesson observations, departmental review, book looks, data analysis and student voice. CTLs are expected to monitor standards within their own subject area and teaching and learning forms an important part of the department self-evaluation process. All staff are expected to be reflective and match their professional development choices and appraisal to the key principles of this policy.

Formal lesson observations will take place in the Autumn and Summer Terms, staff to be observed using criteria based around progress data, job roles, new starters etc. It will be carried out by Lead Observers with another member of staff. Judgments will be made based on student learning and progress. Grades will not be given for lessons but strengths (WWW) and areas for development (EBI) will be fed back. The senior team will conduct follow-up observations if learning and progress is a cause for concern. The member of staff will be placed on a supportive programme with an agreed time scale to improve their practice.

Departmental review will take place in the Spring Term and will run over two days using the learning walk model to observe learning and progress. CTL will have a meeting with a member of SLT to review their post exam analysis and departmental action plan. Staff will be asked to complete a survey before the departmental review. At the end of the departmental review, SLT will give formal and written feedback to the CTL. CTLs are expected to feedback to their team. CTLs should take into consideration this review and havelock their action plan before the end of the Spring Term.

Learning walks, book scrutinies and student voice surveys will take place as per the Assessment calendar and will be carried out by SLT, YTL, CTL or postholders. Collaborative learning walks may be carried out by any Department members.

Learning and Teaching Priorities for 2015 - 2016

- Differentiation
- Marking, assessment and feedback
- Independent Learning and Homework

Planning Guidance

Good planning should include:

1. A seating plan including pupil target data, pupil groups (SEND, PP, G and T, EAL) and any differentiation ordinarily available.
2. Up-to-date pupil progress and assessment data with intervention details.
3. Lesson planning – staff should consider below planning model, annotated powerpoints, planner sheets, sections from schemes of work, context sheets with details about students/group circumstances and differentiation.

NB: Items in red should be included every lesson

Prepare for learning

Have you made links with prior/future learning?

Is your starter engaging?

Have you considered the bigger picture of this lesson/how does it fit in a wider context?

Agree learning objectives and outcomes

Are the learning objectives differentiated and linked to colour progression pathway?

Have you used current progress/target data to ensure they are pitched correctly?

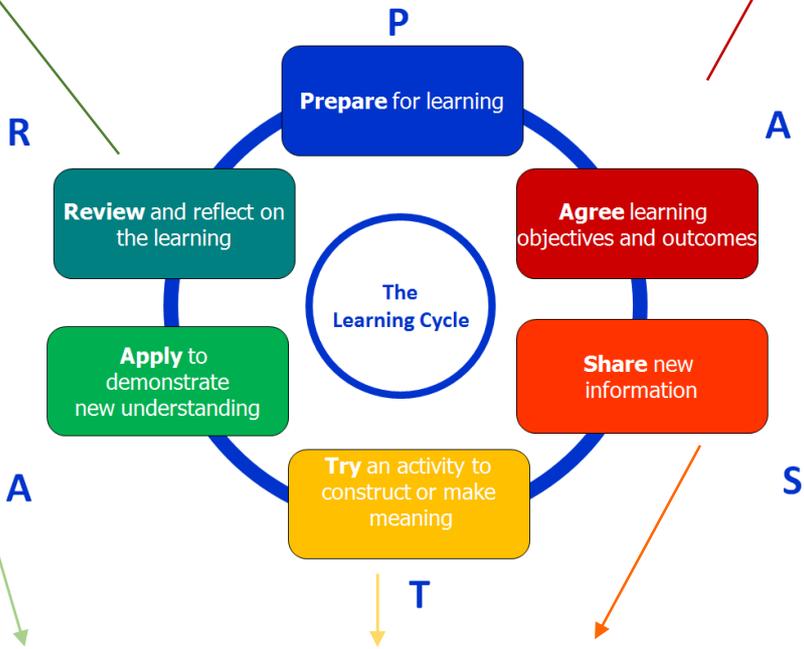
Are they challenging?

Do students have a role in establishing learning objectives and outcomes?

Review and reflect on the learning

Have you/the students reviewed learning against the learning outcomes/CPP?

Does review, marking and/or assessment enable students to know what grade/level they are working at and what they need to do to progress?



Share, Try, Apply Have you considered the different abilities/needs of groups of students in the class and differentiated resources, activities, strategies, student groups, to match learning to their needs?

Will the teaching strategies/style impact on learning? Are they well-judged and imaginative?

Have you used mini-plenaries throughout to check progress against the learning outcomes and to highlight how to reach the next level?

Have you included literacy, numeracy or SMSC?

Does homework support the learning?

Appendix 1: Key features for Effective Learning

All students should have...	Why we think this is important	Learning Cycle
An active starter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stimulates the brain, get students into thinking zone Creates a calm, orderly climate for learning Engages students with the learning objective/s Creates enquiry for the next phase of learning 	PREPARE AGREE
An understanding of the learning objectives , outcomes and success criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are more motivated if they understand what they are learning, why they are learning it and how they will know if they have been successful. Sharing them in an interesting way creates engagement. Success criteria used more 	AGREE
Access to resources which engage, challenge, or create relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hooks can generate a desire to learn, explore and extend thinking Resources should support the learning objective and wider skills Making links with the real world adds a wider value to the learning 	SHARE TRY APPLY
Opportunities for collaborative learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group or paired work encourages deeper learning through dialogue Enables different learning styles and intelligences to be included Students are more willing to take risks or engage in open enquiry with others 	SHARE TRY APPLY
Chances to engage in quality dialogue about their learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher and TA input and feedback during the learning process is needed to ensure that individual students make appropriate progress Planned opportunities for guided intervention can address underperformance 	All
Mini-plenaries to review their progress during the lesson Use of CPP in all lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are more motivated when they can see they are making progress Success criteria enable quick peer/self /teacher assessment Generates progress information for intervention and reshaping 	REVIEW
Well- paced learning with clear transitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A crisp pace maintains the learning momentum Dips in pace or lengthy transitions are often times when the learning climate deteriorates and progression slows down 	All
Activities which allow them to ask and answer challenging questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning when questioning will happen helps to embed the learning Higher order questioning encourages deeper learning and understanding Those who know the answer shouldn't be the ones asking the questions! 	SHARE TRY APPLY
A plenary which reviews their progress and makes links with future learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates an opportunity to evaluate and celebrate progress Identifies personal priorities for future learning Students can see the bigger picture for the learning in that lesson Reflection on what they have learned (their perspective). What skills have they used to learn in the lesson? 	REVIEW

Appendix 2: Marking and Assessment Protocol

Rationale

In order to realise our school's cornerstones and to offer the highest quality guidance and feedback, which will equip students to understand how to make progress, Acton High School has a Marking and Assessment Protocol. The protocol is aware of the expectations placed on all teachers in the National Teacher Standards with regard to assessment, feedback and marking:

2 – Promote good progress and outcomes by students

5 – Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all students

6 – Make accurate and productive use of assessment

P3 – Have an extensive knowledge and well-informed understanding of the assessment requirements for the subjects/ curriculum areas they teach, including those related to public examinations and qualifications.

Marking is the responsibility of the class teacher. Work should be assessed on a regular basis and clear and appropriate records kept.

Aims

1. All students will know their school target grade and personal/aspirational grade and these should be found in their book/folder.
2. All departments will use a range of assessment methods to measure progress and identify targets for improvement. This will include formal assessments (based on examination style questions), peer and self-assessment and regular marking of classwork and homework.
3. Formal assessments will take place as calendared and will be marked in detail using examination mark schemes and criteria.
4. At least one piece of Classwork, independent learning and homework will be marked in detail at least once every half term. All work to be marked in detail should follow the format of what went well, even better if, together with a student comment.
 - a. WWW: Include positive comments where appropriate, and explain why the work was good.
 - b. EBI: write a specific comment about what needs to be done to improve the work, based on specific assessment criteria, objectives or their target grade/level.
 - c. Student comment: students must have the opportunity to comment and act on the targets set. Time should be allocated in lessons for this to take place. It is expected that the student engages with the teacher feedback and their response should be evidenced. This is essential to maximise the impact of marking and in making marking a productive dialogue between teacher and student.
5. Staff should use the literacy marking codes and all students understand the meaning of these codes.
6. Teacher marking should be completed in red pen, peer or self-assessment should be completed in green pen.
7. Detailed verbal feedback should be acknowledged by a verbal feedback stamp or a student comment noting what was spoken about.
8. Independent learning and Homework should be set and marked as per each department policy. Parents should be kept informed if students do not complete homework as per the school and department's follow-up systems.
9. Good work and effort should be rewarded using the school reward system and celebrated through rewards events and assemblies.
10. All staff are encourage to use SIMS mark sheet to track students' progress and learning objectives, particularly the new colour progression pathway reporting system for KS3. These records should show the results of a range of homework, classwork and assessment tasks and should form the basis for reporting attainment and progress to parents, CTL and SLT.

Monitoring

It is the responsibility of SLT, YTL and CTL to ensure that all class teachers assess work on a regular basis, and keep clear and appropriate records. The quality of marking and feedback will be monitored by these staff via book scrutinies and departmental reviews as per the assessment calendar. This will involve looking at a selection of exercise books or work samples to evaluate the effectiveness of this protocol. The outcomes of book scrutinies will be shared with

subject areas and individuals and may inform part of the appraisal process. Assessment data will be used to identify underachievers and intervention strategies should be led in departments.

Tips for reducing workload and increasing the impact of marking by enhancing student engagement with written feedback.

Instead of...	The teacher...	The student...
Writing annotations in the body of a piece of work and giving an overall comment	Only writes annotations in the body of the work.	Writes an overall review highlighting WWW/Ebi
Writing annotations in the body of a piece of work and giving an overall comment	Only writes an overall WWW/EBI comment	Annotates areas of their work to show WWW and areas for improvement (EBI)
Writing extensive comments	Only gives one WWW and one EBI	Works to show improvements on the one issue identified
Writing well done you have... next to good aspects of the work	Puts a double tick next to the best parts of the work	Adds a reason for the double ticks
Marking every question in detail	Only marks highlighted questions in detail. There is no expectation that all class notes will be marked. Check your department policy and mark tasks where your marking will have an impact.	Marks (or peer marks) the work before it is submitted, highlighting the two areas where they would like most help
Writing the same explanation on every piece of work when the same mistake is made by many students	Goes over the question in class	Writes their own correct answer
Writing out a full solution when a student gets a question wrong	Writes a hint or the next step	Completes the correction
Correcting work when a student makes a small mistake	Use literacy code from 6 principles Writes WWT(What's wrong with this?) or (RTQ (read the question) or ** (check this again) or QWC (quality of written communication)	The student makes their own corrections
Marking only extended pieces of work	Reviews in class students' initial plans for this work prior to marking the extended piece of work.	Does not hand in poor work!
Giving back work and moving straight on	Gives students time to write a comment and act on the EBI feedback given. Or allows students to discuss in pairs and identify and write down action points. Identifies a task to enable students to make progress on the EBI	Students read and engage with the EBI before beginning the improvement task or completing more work.

Appendix 3: Effective AFL

Acton High School believe Assessment for Learning is a contemporary way to improve pedagogy and develop students to become independent learners. Assessment for Learning is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there. Assessment for Learning is also known as formative assessment.

Assessment for Learning Strategies

Research has identified a number of classroom strategies that are particularly effective in promoting formative assessment practice.

1. The strategic use of questioning
Questioning is used not only as a pedagogical tool but also as a deliberate way for the teacher to find out what students know, understand and are able to do.
2. Effective teacher feedback
Effective teacher feedback focuses on established success criteria and tells the students what they have achieved and where they need to improve. Importantly, the feedback provides specific suggestions about how that improvement might be achieved.
3. Peer feedback
Peer feedback occurs when a student uses established success criteria to tell another student what they have achieved and where improvement is necessary. Again, the feedback provides specific suggestions to help achieve improvement.
4. Student self-assessment
Student self-assessment encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning. It incorporates self-monitoring, self-assessment and self-evaluation.
5. The formative use of summative assessment
Summative assessment is a necessary aspect of education. Formative use can be made of summative assessment, both before and after the assessment event.

AHS Principles

In September 2014, the school improvement group identified strategies for Assessment for Learning. The AHS principles, formerly known as the non-negotiables, were introduced via learning and teaching briefings. We anticipate these strategies are used consistently and effectively cross the school. It is also a way to raise standards and achievement. Teachers are expected to assess student's work **every cycle** (once every two weeks) as a minimum requirement. They must also give feedback to students and plan for time to reflect and act upon this feedback.

1. Improvement point sticker
Teachers will use the improvement point sticker to relay this feedback; however red pen marking can also be used to correct literacy or write further comments where necessary.
The improvement point can also become a focus in a class lesson, or set as Independent Learning. The teacher makes the judgement here as to when and where to interject (links directly to new lesson plan).
2. Green pen marking
Students should use green pen to self and peer assess their work in lessons. All staff should consider opportunity for self and peer assessment when planning their lesson.
3. Verbal feedback stamp
A verbal feedback stamp is to be used after a discussion has taken place between teacher and student. The student should then record any key points, actions or comments in green pen. The teacher will stamp the work (stamp also contains date so we can track how often this is used).

4. Common Literacy Code

Teachers should not correct all mistakes in students' work, but instead must adhere to the literacy code. This gives a set of codes (that students have in their planners) so they recognise the issue, and can track it and self-correct it. Insert Literacy code link after approval.

5. AfL Collectors' Cards

AfL Collectors cards are strategies displayed in each classroom. They are ideas for group tasks, individual tasks and peer tasks. It is a way to remind teachers to adapt their lessons and allow flexibility in delivering their lessons, but also gives students the opportunity to select them for themselves thus becoming more independent. The cards give further differentiation to learning and can be used at any time during a reflective moment in the lesson.

Acton High School is committed to staff development and aims to drive improvement in students' outcomes. Our CPD programme includes learning and teaching briefings and whole staff inset is focused on staff and student need in line with school priorities. See further detail in our CDP policy- [hyper link?](#)

Appendix 4: Independent Learning and Homework protocol

Introduction

Acton High School supports the view that independent learning and homework makes a valuable contribution to the education and development of children.

Core Subjects

English, Maths and Science will set homework once a week. Tasks set will be based on improving classwork and will link to an improvement question or point the teacher has given via feedback to the student.

Foundation Subjects (Years 7 and 8) Other subjects will be included in our new Independent Learning Programme (RISE Challenges) which are project-based investigation tasks.

Aims

The purpose of independent learning and homework is to:

- Raise the standard of achievement.
- Provide opportunities for students to work independently and to take responsibility for organising their work.
- Help students recognise the link between good study habits and higher standards of achievement with the aim of developing good study habits for their lives.
- Check that students have understood class work.
- Consolidate or extend work covered in school.
- Prepare for future lessons.
- Give time for more extensive coverage of the curriculum, through integrated planning of class work and homework.
- Help parents understand what their children are learning in school and to encourage them to participate in that learning.

Setting and Marking independent learning and Homework

Teachers should:

- Plan independent learning and homework as an integral part of the curriculum.
- Set tasks that can be completed within the allocated time and that are as far as possible matched to the abilities of students.
- Set independent learning and homework tasks that are varied in type encouraging students to use the school's VLE / Intranet, library, parents etc.
- Position the setting of independent learning and homework so that it is set within the context of the topic being studied.
- Ensure that extended independent learning and homework/coursework (usually in KS4 and 5) are monitored weekly.
- Set independent learning and homework with an increased emphasis on research and independent study as students move from Y9 to Y13.
- Make sure that students understand what the independent learning and homework is and that they copy it down correctly in their planners.
- Give a reasonable time for its completion (a week unless otherwise stated).
- Ensure that work is marked in accordance with the school and departmental protocol.
- Provide feedback to students on their progress.
- Year 10 and 11 students are expected to spend between 40 – 60 minutes per subject per week and Year 12 and 13 students are expected to spend between 3 – 5 hours per subject per week.

Key stages	Time allocation per week
KS3	30 mins per subject
KS4	1 hour per subject
KS5	5 hours per subject

Monitoring and Evaluation

- All students will have a planner, which will be monitored weekly by both the Form Tutor and Parents. This will be monitored by YT and DYTL.
- CTLs will monitor independent learning and homework through line management meetings with their SLT link and discuss this agenda regularly in departmental meetings.
- Raising standard leaders will monitor the homework of selected students on a regular basis with the SLT project lead.

Appendix 5: Presentation

Aim

Acton High School expect all students to take pride in their work and this work is always presented to the highest standard.

Celebration and motivation:

To foster motivation and celebrate 'Achievement by All', all staff at Acton High School will ensure presentation and handwriting is promoted by:

- Celebrating work of a high standard, including homework
- Ensuring good presentation and handwriting is rewarded in line with the whole school behaviour policy
- Headteacher awards and departmental postcards
- Showcasing and celebrating a range of work produced by students in the foyer and around school
- Putting students' work in Best Work Book and creating competition between form groups
- Displaying written work with annotation comments recognising achievement
- Modelling joined, legible and consistently formed handwriting on boards, in books, on flip charts and displays
- Providing modelled examples and reviewing expectations with students
- Ensuring the reward system links to achievement points categories including well presented work, good effort and excellent independent learning work

General expectation of high quality presentation:

- Black ball point pen for all writing and redrafting
- Green pen for student peer/self-marking together with signature
- Every piece of work is dated
- Red pen for teacher marking
- All work must have a heading and date underlined with a ruler
- Denote class and homework
- All drawings and diagrams are in pencil
- Coloured pencils, not felt pens, are used in exercise books
- Pencil and ruler for drawing
- Capital letters at the beginning of sentences
- One neat line through any errors or mistakes
- Tippex and correction pens are not to be used by students
- Books and assessment folders are well kept with no writing or graffiti on the outside or inside of covers