Teaching and Learning Policy

Person(s) responsible for this policy		Deputy Head Academic, Assistant Head T&L	
Last review by	Sarah Elliot	**Review date**	January 2024
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INTRODUCTION
At Streatham and Clapham, we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the idea that both adults and pupils learn new things every day. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone; it should also involve students thinking hard. Through our teaching we equip pupils with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their future lives. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help pupils to lead happy and rewarding lives.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES
At our school we provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows pupils to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential.

Through our teaching we aim to:
- Enable pupils to develop an appropriate and ambitious level of knowledge and skills across the curriculum.
- Enable pupils to become fearless learners: confident, resourceful, enquiring, and independent.
- Foster pupils' self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with other people – both peers and adults.
- Develop pupils' self-respect and encourage pupils to respect the ideas, cultures, attitudes, values, and feelings of others.
- Enable pupils to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this community.
- Help pupils grow into reliable, independent, and positive citizens.
- Take pride in their work and the work of others.

EFFECTIVE LEARNING

We acknowledge that there are many elements involved in effective learning. We aim to develop these in our lessons, homework assignments and co-curricular activities. We also know that a varied programme of activities allows and motivates students to advance their learning in different, fruitful directions. Our lessons therefore include:

- Direct instruction.
- Deliberate practice.
- Modelling and demonstrating.
- Questioning.
- Discussion in pairs and as a group.
- Investigation and problem solving.
- Research, using both paper and digital resources.
- Use of ICT using iPads and laptops.
- Creative activities, such as those connected to Art, Music, Literature and Drama.
- Designing and making things.
- Participation in athletic or other physical activity.
- Co-curricular activities.
- Fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest.
- Engaging with guest visitors and performers.

Effective Teaching

When teaching we focus on motivating the pupils and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum so that they can reach the highest level of personal achievement. We use the school curriculum plans to guide our teaching. These set out the aims, objectives and values of the school and detail what is to be taught to each year group. We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives that are shared with the pupils. Our lesson plans are based on agreed schemes of work, which are carefully designed to build up knowledge and skills at an appropriate pace, while also revisiting earlier material to enable students to have a strong foundation from which to tackle greater intellectual challenges.

Teachers make on-going assessments of each child's progress and they use this information when planning their lessons. It enables them to take into account the abilities of all their pupils. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge and skills of all our pupils. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability. When planning work for pupils with special educational needs, we give due regard to information and targets contained in the pupils' individual learning plan. Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for pupils with disabilities and barriers to learning. Teachers will scaffold lessons based on the starting points and ongoing assessment data of each pupil (both high and low).

There must be a good balance of individual, group and whole-class teaching. There may be several different activities in progress and at these times the teacher will be helping mainly one group or individual whilst the remainder will be involved in planned activities that do not require teacher input. It is important that while this is in progress pupils stay on task.

This can be helped by:
- Having well organised and labelled resources;
- Taking time to train pupils in procedures;
- Making sure that pupils are aware of what they must do when they have completed an activity.

Feedback

We recognise that effective feedback which is understood and acted upon by the student can have a positive and significant impact on their learning. We aim to provide feedback which is 'meaningful, motivating and manageable'.

We provide feedback and opportunities for feedback in four ways, aiming to have maximum impact in a way that is manageable for staff:
• detailed written or verbal feedback to individuals
• whole class feedback
• self-feedback
• peer-feedback

We ensure that students are given the opportunity to act upon the feedback they receive to close the gap between where they are and where they aim to be. Work sampling takes place regularly, as well as discussions with students and staff about the effectiveness of feedback.

Teachers need to arrange time to observe, assess, reflect and review achievements with each child on a regular basis. The child should be involved in this process by the encouragement of self-appraisal and target setting when reading their report with their form tutor. Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process.

Record Keeping

All teachers should keep detailed records of their work with the class and of individual pupils' activities and progress. Assessment data is also stored centrally by the academic team.

Time Management

It is important that activities are well planned so that each child is working at their correct level, that they begin promptly and that the initial pace is maintained. All pupils should know what to do as soon as they enter the classroom and after they have completed an activity. A reminder list of tasks for individuals who have completed work ahead of the group is helpful. At the same time, teachers must be able to work flexibly with their lesson plan to address misconceptions and gaps in learning which may emerge during the lesson.

Classroom Management

Each of our teachers makes a special effort to establish good working relationships with all pupils in the class and school. We treat the pupils with kindness and respect. We treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All our teachers follow the school policy with regard to discipline and classroom management. We expect all pupils to comply with these rules that we jointly devise to promote the best learning opportunities for all. We praise pupils for their efforts and by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. We insist on good order and behaviour at all times. When pupils fall short of these expectations we follow the guidelines for sanctions as outlined in our school behaviour policy.

We try to ensure that all tasks and activities that the pupils perform are safe. When we plan to take pupils out of school, we follow a strict set of procedures to ensure safety: the venue is visited, risk assessments are completed, and various permissions are obtained. We inform parents, and obtain their permission, before the visit takes place.

We deploy Teaching Assistants as effectively as possible. They usually work in the Learning Support Centre but will come to lessons in Year 7 and as needed. The Modern Foreign Language assistants are used to develop students' speaking skills in Spanish/French/Mandarin.

Routines and Rules

Routines and rules in the classroom contribute to a healthy learning environment. To be effective they should be:

- Agreed by the pupils and clearly understood.
- Fair and consistent.
- Realistic and positive.
- Kept to a minimum but enforced.
- Daily activities with which the pupils are familiar such as teachers greeting students at the door.
- Seating plans are used with classes in Years 7-11 to ensure that students are supported appropriately e.g. SEND students tend to be at the front, a student with a visual impairment needs to be near a plug for her Braille reader.

All rules should result in the pupils knowing the boundaries of behaviour and should be set within the terms of The Behaviour Policy.

Achievement

Social, physical, creative and academic achievements are celebrated in many ways as an on-going process in all aspects of school life, by:

- Verbal or written praise by teachers, peers, Head and parents.
- Displays of work.
- Opportunities to perform or share.
- Encouraging self-esteem.
- The awarding of stickers, House points and certificates.
- The awarding of positive points e.g. for good effort, on Class Charts.
- Sharing success with the community.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING

Staff development needs will be identified in line with this policy and Performance Management Policy. The Teaching and Learning Policy has been formulated to provide a basis for staff to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in their classroom and across the school. In order to provide a clear picture of the quality and consistency of practice across school, when evaluating teaching and learning in school, it will be monitored and evaluated through:

- Classroom observation.
- Sampling pupils' work.
- Sharing pupils' work throughout school and discussing quality.
- Internal moderation of pupils' work.
- Learning conversations with pupils.

All our teachers reflect on their strengths and areas for development and plan their professional development needs accordingly. We do all we can to support our teachers in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice.

We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all. This process is linked with the ISI criteria for teaching and learning in order to provide a clear picture of the quality and consistency of practice across school.

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by the pupils.

The learning environment should be organised to ensure that pupils have the opportunity to:
- Achieve academically.
- Work individually, in groups and as a class.
- Make decisions.
- Work co-operatively.
- Solve problems.
- Be creative.
- Discuss their ideas.
- Develop social skills.
- Develop independence.
- Use their initiative.
- Receive support.

Pupils should be encouraged to develop organisational skills and independence through:
- Appropriate tasks.
- Confidence building.
- Examples.
- Co-operation.
- Provision of suitable opportunities.
- Responsibilities.

Furniture
All classrooms should have:
Tables arranged for:
- Ease of working.
- Flexibility.
- Purposeful discussion.
- Provision of quiet corners.
- Large working surfaces.
- The teacher's sight of screens (iPads and laptops).
- The teacher's ability to circulate to live mark and provide help.

Chairs should normally:
- Be sufficient in number for the activities in the classroom.
- Leave enough room for pupils to move easily around the room.

Storage units arranged to:
- Support different areas of the curriculum.
- Support a project or activity.
- Give character to a room.
- House pupils' personal belongings.

Resources

Materials in all areas should be well organised, be of good quality, be clean, tidy, attractive, accessible and well-labelled. As far as possible, materials should be near the appropriate working area. Stocks should be checked and replenished regularly. Pupils should be taught and shown by example that resources are finite and that we all have a duty to care for equipment and not misuse, damage or waste it. Books and other equipment represent a considerable investment.

Relevant textbooks should be available in each classroom. Some sets of books, e.g. dictionaries, thesauri and atlases are purchased for specific classes and should not be removed.

The effective implementation of curriculum subjects calls for a wide range of equipment to be used. These do not necessarily have to be stored in the classroom. The school library has a selection of books covering all curriculum subjects. It is important that equipment borrowed from outside sources and other classrooms is returned promptly and in good condition. Each classroom has supplies and an inventory of appropriate equipment, including computers, Maths apparatus and calculators, etc. Teachers should be able to account for the use and location of this equipment.

Finance
Curriculum orders come from a centralised budget though coordinators request budgets through the finance office directly in the Spring term. Staff should inform coordinators of any requirements as early as possible in the year and Subject Coordinators should prove the Head an outline of how they wish to allocate their monies. Requests for all equipment should be authorised by the Head through COMPLEAT.

Specialist Rooms
Science, Art, DT, Computer Science, Music and Drama have specialist rooms with accessible and well-labelled areas for the storage of equipment. Teachers and technicians should check that the resources are appropriate for their groups and that consumable resources are renewed regularly. Teachers should also be aware of the safety aspects of all technology equipment.

Display
Displays in the school should be used to create an attractive and stimulating environment. The work displayed should be of a high standard and use both 2D and 3D in a variety of media and be changed frequently. It should include work on different aspects of the curriculum and reflect the individual child's efforts as well as ability. Ideally, displays should stimulate discussion and be accompanied by pupils' questions and answers so that they are interactive.

Supply Teachers
To ensure continuity, teachers should leave written guidance and suggested activities for all planned absences from the classroom. Teams is used to provide the teacher's files including lesson resources and homework assignments. The Head of Department is a member of each Class Team in their department.

School Policies
School policies are set out in the school policy file and are on the school website: https://schs.gdst.net/information/policies-and-procedures/. It is the duty of each teacher to be familiar with school policies and to apply them.

Equal Opportunities
All pupils have the right to equal opportunities. Teachers' expectations of behaviour and performance by all pupils should be the same. Teachers must ensure everyone has the opportunity to participate in lesson by using techniques such as 'hands down'. Teachers ensure equity through addressing students' individual learning plans and knowing students as individuals. We value each child as a unique individual, and teachers are familiar with the relevant equal opportunities legislation covering race, gender and disability. We strive to meet the needs of all our pupils, and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements related to matters of inclusion.

Role of the Head of Department
- Inspire and lead the development in the delivery of their subject/s in innovative and exciting ways.
- Monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment.
- Ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching.
- Support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively.
- Ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning.
- Monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations.

Role of the Assistant Head (Teaching and Learning and Staff Development)

- Lead the staff body in developing and maintaining excellent standards of teaching and learning.
- Through the Teaching and Learning party, respond to research, experiment with strategies and ideas, and share innovative and inspiring approaches to teaching.
- Implement school-wide strategies based on the research literature, our own action research and feedback from teachers and students.

Role of the Parents/Guardians

The school is proud of its partnership with parents. We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping pupils to learn. We do all we can to inform parents about what and how their pupils are learning by:

- Holding parents' evenings to discuss pupils' progress.
- Sending an annual report to parents in which we explain the progress made by each pupil and indicate how the child can improve further.
- Explaining to parents how they can support their pupils with homework.
- Holding an annual welcome evening and termly curriculum letters.
- Holding regular workshops to explain relevant developments in their child's education.

We encourage parents to:

- Support excellent attendance at school.
- Promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general.
- Fulfil the requirements set out in the home/school agreement.
- Inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school.

RACE EQUALITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All pupils have equal access to the curriculum regardless of their gender, disability or ability. We plan work that is differentiated for the performance of all groups and individuals and are committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work free from racial intimidation and harassment to achieve their potential.

REVIEW
This policy will be reviewed in September 2024 and annually thereafter.