St John Fisher Catholic College

Teaching and Learning Policy

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1. Aims

At St John Fisher Catholic College, our mission is to know each of our learners as the unique God-given gift that they are and to nurture and inspire them to become the very best version of themselves. As a team, we strive to educate learners as a spiritual, physical, emotional and academic being, so that the learners in our care grow to be confident young adults who make positive contributions to our local Church, our local community and the world around them.

We believe that learning is the process by which learners gradually acquire and assimilate knowledge, concepts, skills, and attitudes to enable them to make greater sense of the world. Teaching and learning is central to our work as educators. We expect all our staff to deliver high quality, stimulating and dynamic lessons. We expect all learners to be supported and challenged to make good progress in their learning. Learners of all ability levels will be given equal opportunities to learn to achieve their full potential. Our purpose is to create a learning environment which fosters motivation and allows all learners to flourish. Knowledge is at the heart of what we do; we aim to empower our learners to understand how to learn as well as striving to teach them what to learn.

Aims:

· To provide a learning experience for every child that takes full account of their individual needs,' starting points and aspirations.

· To ensure that our learners are active and independent learners who participate in lessons to achieve their best in every learning situation and will continue to do so throughout their lives.

· To ensure that learners are highly literate and numerate, able to apply their skills and knowledge to new and different situations, to achieve well in school and beyond.

· To make links with the learning that learners do outside the classroom and with future careers.

· To focus upon continual raising standards of teaching and learning in the school, to inspire and motivate learners and staff.

· To identify and share good practice in teaching and learning across all curriculum areas.

· To provide guidelines for teaching and learning and establish clear criteria for best practice and consistency.

· To improve levels of achievement and attainment.

2. Our guiding principles

The Fisher Way aims to educate and inspire with joy, faith and love because we are an inclusive Catholic community**.** Within our mission, we strive for excellence with our shared values driving

learners towards being ready, responsible, respectful, resilient, to have pride and to be curious. Our minimum expectations in lessons help to apply these values and model our expectations.

Learners learn best at our school when they:

- Have their basic physical needs met.
- Feel secure, safe and valued.
- Feel a sense of belonging to the group.
- Are engaged, curious and motivated.
- Can see the relevance of what they are doing.
- Know what outcome is intended.
- Can link what they are doing to past and future experiences.
- Understand the task.
- Have a pleasant working environment and the tools needed.
- Have access to adapted learning to support and scaffold.
- Are not disrupted or distracted by others.
- Can work with others or on their own, depending on the task.
- Are guided, taught or helped in appropriate ways at appropriate times.
- Can review and revisit what they are learning.
- Can apply the learning in both familiar and new contexts.
- Can be resilient when learning is hard, recognising mistakes as learning opportunities.
- Can self-regulate if things are not going well.

3. Roles and responsibilities

Teaching and learning in our school is a shared responsibility, and everyone in our school community has an important role to play. Details of expectations from all stakeholders can be found in our Home School Agreement.

3.1 Teachers

Teachers at our school will:

- Follow the expectations for teaching and professional conduct as set out in the Teachers' Standards
- Follow The Fisher way expectations for Teaching and Learning as set out in the Staff Handbook.
- Actively engage parents/carers in their child's learning through the use of Arbor, newsletters and parents' evenings including clearly communicating home learning.

- Update parents/carers on learners' progress through parents' evening and a full annual report on their child's progress
- Meet the expectations set out in our linked policies.

3.2 Support staff

Support staff at our school will:

- Know learners well and differentiate support to meet their individual learning needs.
- Support teaching and learning with flexibility and resourcefulness.
- Use agreed assessment for learning strategies.
- Use effective marking and feedback as required.
- Engage in providing inspiring lessons and learning opportunities.
- Feedback observations of learners to teachers.
- Ask questions to make sure they've understood expectations for learning.
- Identify and use resources to support learning.
- Have high expectations and celebrate achievement.
- Demonstrate and model themselves as effective learners.
- Meet the expectations set out in the linked policies.

3.3 Faculty Leaders

Faculty leaders at our school will:

- Help to create well-sequenced, broad and balanced curriculum plans that build knowledge and skills using a metacognitive approach.
- Sequence lessons in a way that allows learners to make good progress from their starting points.
- Ensure that lessons across the faculty provide regular opportunities for pupil participation.
- Ensure that subject-specific skills and processes are made explicit and developed through routine tasks.
- Assign a vocabulary lead for each subject to oversee the delivery of the subject vocabulary curriculum.
- Use their budget effectively to resource their subject, providing teachers with necessary resources for learning.
- Drive improvement in their faculties working with teachers to identify any challenges.
- Timetable their subject to allocate time for learners to:
- Achieve breadth and depth
- Gain full knowledge and understanding.
- Demonstrate excellence.

- Moderate progress across their faculty by, for example, systematically reviewing progress against a range of evidence and reviewing qualitative and quantitative performance data.
- Improve on weaknesses identified in their monitoring activities.
- Create and share clear intentions for their faculties.
- Encourage teachers to share ideas, resources and good practice.
- Meet the expectations set out in linked policies

3.4 Senior leaders

Senior leaders at our school will:

- Have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality, inclusive education to all.
- Celebrate achievement and have high expectations for everyone.
- Hold staff and learners to account for their teaching and learning.
- Plan and evaluate strategies to secure high-quality teaching and learning across the school.
- Manage resources to support high-quality teaching and learning.
- Provide support and guidance to other staff through coaching and mentoring.
- Input and monitor the impact of continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities to improve staff's practice and subject knowledge.
- Promote team working at all levels, for example by buddying teachers up to support one another where appropriate.
- Address underachievement and intervene promptly.
- Meet the expectations set out in linked policies.

3.5 Learners

Learners at our school will:

- Take responsibility for their own learning and support the learning of others.
- Meet expectations for good behaviour for learning at all times, respecting the rights of others to learn.
- Attend all lessons on time and be ready to learn, with any necessary equipment for the lesson.
- Be curious, ambitious, engaged and confident learners.
- Understand what they are working towards, how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Put maximum effort and focus into their work.
- Complete home learning activities as required.

- Meet the expectations set out in linked policies.

3.6 Parents and carers

Parents and carers of learners at our school will:

- Value learning.
- Encourage their child as a learner.
- Make sure their child is ready and able to learn every day.
- Support good attendance.
- Participate in discussions about their child's progress and attainment.
- Communicate with the school to share information promptly.
- Provide resources as required to support learning.
- Encourage their child to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Support and give importance to home learning.

3.7 Governors

Governors at our school will:

- Monitor that resources and funding are allocated effectively to support the school's approach to teaching and learning.
- Monitor the impact of teaching and learning strategies on learners' progress and attainment.
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.
- Make sure other school policies promote high-quality teaching, and that these are being implemented.

4. Specific Teaching and Learning Expectations

At St John Fisher Catholic College, our expectations for teaching and learning are organised around three mutually reinforcing pillars: Learner Participation, Disciplinary Thinking and Vocabulary. Together, these describe the entitlement of every learner and the features of effective classroom practice.

The pillars establish consistent principles without requiring identical lessons. Faculties and teachers will apply them through the distinctive knowledge, methods and language of their subjects. They are supported by the Learning Stages, which provide learners with a familiar sequence and shared language for learning.

4.1 Learner Participation

Rationale

Participation is the gateway to learning. When only a small number of learners respond, the teacher gains an incomplete picture of understanding and other learners can remain cognitively passive. Universal participation demonstrates that every learner's thinking matters, builds confidence, and enables teachers to identify misconceptions across the class.

Participation should develop from universal response towards accountable thinking. Learners should increasingly listen, explain, question, justify and build upon the ideas of others.

What will be seen in classrooms

- A culture in which every learner is expected and supported to think and participate.
- Frequent universal-response opportunities, selected purposefully, such as mini whiteboards, ABCD responses, fingers, short written responses or other whole-class checks.
- Questions and tasks that reveal learners' understanding rather than simply rewarding speed or confidence.
- Planned thinking time and, where appropriate, structured paired or whole-class discussion before individuals are asked to contribute.
- Teachers interpreting learners' responses and adapting what happens next by reteaching, probing, modelling, providing further practice or moving learning forward. The use of hinge questions can be used to achieve this.
- Increasingly accountable discussion in which learners explain, justify, challenge respectfully and respond to one another.
- Predictable and inclusive routines that enable learners with SEND, disadvantaged learners and less-confident learners to participate successfully.

4.2 Disciplinary Thinking

Rationale

Teachers teach learners how knowledge is built, tested, organised and communicated within each subject discipline.

Expert thinking is often invisible to novices. Teachers should therefore make disciplinary processes explicit, break complex performance into manageable components and return to useful task structures until learners can use them with increasing independence.

Familiar task structures reduce unnecessary cognitive load and provide learners with security and confidence. This allows them to focus their cognitive effort on the subject content rather than repeatedly having to decode unfamiliar task instructions.

What will be seen in classrooms

- Explicit teaching of how experts within the subject ask questions, use evidence, solve problems, construct explanations and judge quality.
- Carefully selected models, worked examples and teacher narration that make normally hidden thought processes visible.
- Complex disciplinary processes broken down where appropriate, with important components isolated, modelled, practised, retrieved and recombined.
- Repeated subject-specific task structures that build fluency, security and independence without creating superficial uniformity across subjects.
- Learners using secure subject knowledge to reason and think, rather than completing generic activities detached from the discipline.
- Purposeful scaffolding that is gradually reduced as learners become more secure.
- Regular retrieval and cumulative practice so that important knowledge and processes remain available for more complex thinking.
- Subject-specific task types determined by faculties. These may include, for example, structured text summaries, causation maps and comparisons of interpretations in History.

4.3 Vocabulary

Rationale

Vocabulary is both a curriculum entitlement and a matter of equity. Learners need the language of each subject to access texts, participate in discussion, understand questions and communicate precise ideas.

Vocabulary teaching should go beyond providing a static glossary. It should develop learners' understanding of meaning, morphology, relationships between words, pronunciation and the confident application of vocabulary in speech and writing.

What will be seen in classrooms

- Deliberate selection of high-value Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary linked to curriculum content and disciplinary thinking.
- Clear, learner-friendly explanations of meaning supported by examples, non-examples and links to prior knowledge.
- Appropriate exploration of morphology, including roots, prefixes and suffixes, to help learners unlock unfamiliar words and develop word families.

- Teachers modelling accurate pronunciation and the precise use of vocabulary in subject-specific speech and writing.
- Structured opportunities for learners to say, read, write, retrieve and apply important vocabulary repeatedly and in context.
- Support such as sentence stems, visuals and word banks used purposefully without replacing ambitious language.
- Teachers checking whether learners can use vocabulary meaningfully, rather than merely copying or recalling a definition.

4.4 Learning Stages

At St John Fisher Catholic College, the expectation is that there is consistency in the sequence of teaching and learning. Our 'Learning Stages' have been developed using the principles of the seven step model below. The 'Learning Stages' ensure that there is consistency for our learners and that there is sufficient time given to prepare learners for new knowledge in order that they may secure the knowledge and are able to apply.



All teachers must use the following images on their PPT or flip chart. A border is added to the correct stage to indicate to learners which part of the lesson they are on.



Recap

The recap stage contains the Do Now Activity (DNA) and is to ensure that learners are supported in retrieving information that forms the foundation for the learning in the lesson. Teachers can then assess against the DNA to inform any gaps which will need to be addressed before continuing. This would also be the stage where previous learning is reviewed and feedback is shown to be understood.

Preparation

The preparation stage is to support learners in accessing the knowledge that will be given in the next stage. This would **always include key vocabulary** but might also include glossaries, background/contextual information, a stimulus picture to introduce the topic, the addressing of possible misconceptions and the sharing of initial views. We actively encourage dual-coding as an effective method to teach vocabulary.

Knowledge

This stage is the acquisition and development of new knowledge, understanding, skills and disciplinary processes. This could be reading, teacher explanation, audio visual material etc. and would also include activities such as questioning, categorising, summarising, dual coding etc. all of which help to embed that acquisition. Scaffolding is an important part of this. During this stage, we limit the amount of knowledge given to avoid cognitive overload and will repeat information using different formats to secure acquisition.

Practise

This is the application of learned knowledge through a variety of activities that could range from sample questions, designing and building, composing, playing a game, quizzing all the way through to essay writing. The activity should encourage deep thinking on the part of the learner and will need to be explicitly modelled by the adult to ensure that the learners learn the technique or strategy. This should then be followed by guided work. (I do, we do, you do.) Once modelled,

learners should be encouraged to be independent using the knowledge and skills acquired to complete their activity.

Some learners will need to have reasonable adjustments to further scaffold the activity in order to be independent. These adjustments may come in the form of chunked activities to avoid cognitive overload, knowledge organisers, planning tools etc. Data collected from the independent activities can be used to assess whether learners are working at expected level or not.

Assessment

Assessment underpins each stage and teachers should be using a range of techniques to ensure that learning of knowledge is effective and that they have accurately assessed learning and adapted their teaching to support progress for all.

5. Learning environment

When learners are at school, learning will take place in a range of different environments including internal and external spaces and some use of NSCG sports facilities.

These spaces will be kept safe, clean and ready for learners to use them.

They will be arranged to promote learning through:

- Posters of material learners have previously learned about and can identify.
- Accessible resources for learning such as books, worksheets and other equipment.
- A seating layout that allows everyone to see the board and participate.
- Displays that celebrate and support learning.

6. Adaptive Teaching and reasonable adjustments

Teaching will be adapted responsively to learners' starting points, strengths and needs while maintaining ambitious expectations for all. In accordance with statutory duties we will support learning with reasonable adjustments to cater to the needs of all of our learners, including:

- Learners with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- Learners with English as an additional language (EAL)
- Disadvantaged learners
- Learners that are most able

Each faculty sets out their own specific adaptations. Learners are identified on seating plans with any reasonable adjustments noted.

Additional information can be found in our linked policies for SEND and Learner Premium.

7. Home learning

Each faculty will use a web platform to set retrieval homework. Interleaving and recall are powerful strategies for strengthening long-term learning.

Faculties will determine approaches appropriate to their subjects in accordance with the Homework Policy

8. Marking and feedback

Feedback will clearly explain to learners what they're doing well and what they need to do next to continue to improve their work. Each Faculty has their own Marking and Feedback Addendum which can be found in the linked policy.

9. Assessment, recording and reporting

We will track learners' progress using a combination of formative and summative assessment. Each faculty has their own assessment approach. whole school, there is one formal assessment point for Y7 to Y10. In Y11 they have two assessment points annually. We will provide regular targets for learners and provide termly data reports. Learners will receive a written report annually sharing specific targets. Parents' evenings are held annually with an additional 'settling in' parents' evening for Y7.

10. Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation take place through termly faculty reviews conducted with the Teaching and Learning lead and faculty leaders. The review process is an ongoing, supportive dialogue and evidence gathering process between leaders and the faculty team. Evidence is gathered through learning walks; book looks and learner voice. Further monitoring includes:

- specific group monitoring via the PP Faculty Champions
- peer to peer monitoring
- Tutor monitoring of ECTs
- Regular drop ins
- Faculty specific monitoring.

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed every year by Teaching and Learning Lead. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing board.