

Teaching and Learning Policy

- a) This policy applies to all Trusts managed by Wootton Academy Trust (WAT)
 - b) This policy was adopted by WAT in
 - c) This policy was reviewed in **July 2021**
 - d) The next review is
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Teaching and Learning Policy

Lead member of Leadership Team: Liz McKay
Designated Special Education Needs & Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENCO): Jessica Holmes

Directors Committee: Wootton Upper School LGB and Kimberley LGB
Designated Director for Curriculum: Peter Haddon

Associated documentation:

Equal Opportunities Curriculum Statement
Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy
Complaints Procedure
SEND policy
Homework policy



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2. SUMMARY

- This policy explains Wootton Academy Trust's approach to all aspects of teaching and learning and aims to enhance the quality and consistency of the learning experience for all students.
- It applies to all staff and to all students, from entry in Year 9 to Year 13.
- It links closely with recommended good practice and provides both structure and opportunities for innovation.
- The responsibilities of staff in the management and development of teaching and learning are outlined.

3. Introduction

WAT is committed to the principle that every child has individual needs, has an entitlement to access the full curriculum offer and be fully included in all aspects of the life of WAT, irrespective of ability, race, gender or need and should be respected and valued as individuals.

WAT will address the needs of different groups of learners and deliver high quality teaching and learning which will allow every learner to achieve their potential. WAT will seek to remove all barriers to learning and achievement.

4. Mission Statement

To support and challenge every learner at all times to achieve their personal best leading to improved life and career opportunities.

5. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the quality and consistency in teaching and learning at Wootton Academy Trust Schools. To support the values of the Trust; Aspiration, Opportunity and Belief.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1 The Board of Directors and Wootton Upper School Local Governing Body have responsibility for ...
- Ensuring that this policy is in place, monitored continually and reviewed periodically via the Local Governing Body.
 - Ensuring that any complaint arising from the operation of this policy is dealt with in accordance with the Wootton Academy Trust Complaints Policy.
 - Encouraging, supporting and acclaiming good practice.
- 6.2 The Deputy Head with responsibility for Teaching and Learning is responsible for
- Implementing this policy on a daily basis.
 - Monitoring the work to the Assistant Principals with responsibility for evaluating the quality and consistency of teaching and learning throughout the school via Quality Assurance (QA), SLT Link meetings with middle leaders, learning walks, work sampling, lesson observations, data analysis, Year Leaders, CPD, SEND, student leadership, Pupil Premium and disadvantaged students
 - Ensuring staff, students and parents are aware of their responsibilities within this policy.
 - Monitoring the implementation of the document and reporting to the relevant Local Advisory Body, termly on these matters.
 - Encouraging, supporting and acclaiming good practice. Celebrate learning.

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6.3 The designated Assistant Principals (Teaching & Learning) are responsible for:

- Ensuring staff, students and parents are aware of their responsibilities within this policy, eliciting their support for it and allowing them an opportunity to comment on its effectiveness.
- Providing training and CPD for those with responsibilities within this policy.
- Ensuring that staff are aware of initiatives and recommended good practice in terms of teaching and learning.
- Providing opportunities for colleagues to share and celebrate good practice.
- Communicating with new staff and Early Career Teachers to highlight teaching and learning policy and practice.
- Reviewing learning walks, work samples, lesson observations, appraisals, QA, and data to inform the school improvement plan, including relevant CPD, homework, pupil profiles.

6.4 Subject Middle Leaders are responsible for:

- Monitoring and supporting the implementation of this policy by teachers working in the department and informing their line manager accordingly.
- Regularly discussing items relating to teaching and learning at departmental meetings.
- Highlighting and disseminating effective teaching and learning practice both within and across departments.
- Conducting Learning walks, work samples and lesson observations and appraisal reviews in line with the Appraisal Policy.
- Maintaining an up to date Head of Subject file.
- Implementing the TIP across the department.
- Evaluating the quality and appropriateness of homework set in their department and making changes accordingly.

6.5 Heads of Year are responsible for:

- The academic care of students, that is, knowing that students (both individually and across the cohort) are meeting or exceeding progress data.
- Monitoring data to check the progress of individuals and the year cohort as a whole.
- Monitoring the quality of curricular targets through individual meetings, and in annual reports home to parents.
- Students to have the opportunity to celebrate learning. Students should leave our classrooms with a feeling of achievement and progress.
- Monitoring the work of tutors with regard to PSHCE, CIAG, SMSC, British Values, Equality and Diversity.

6.6 Subject teachers are responsible for:

- Ensuring lessons are planned and structured effectively in order to accommodate the needs of all students.
- Keeping updated regarding latest developments in terms of effective pedagogy and practice.
- Planning for innovative practice to enable all students to access planned learning objectives.
- Meeting the Teacher Standards.
- Implementing the TIP in their lessons and with their Tutees.
- Developing student potential by applying Assessment for Learning principles and setting realistic and challenging targets to move students on to the next level of learning.
- Students to have the opportunity in lessons to celebrate learning. Students should leave our classrooms with a feeling of achievement and progress.

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7. IMPLEMENTATION

7.1 Introduction

Teaching and learning are core functions of our school. Our primary focus is to ensure that students make at least good progress in their lessons. We promote an active and inclusive culture of learning, ensuring that students are inspired and fully involved in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding across all subject areas. It is our aim to motivate all students to have high aspirations and a desire to fulfil their potential both in and out of lessons.

We aim to develop independent and creative learners by encouraging teachers and students to work in partnership to create an active and stimulating learning environment. Parents are encouraged to take an active role in their child's learning and are supported in doing so.

Our key learning and teaching themes are:

Active Learning and Thinking
Differentiation and Scaffolding
Higher order questioning
Marking and Feedback (WWW.EBI.MRI)
Literacy
Pace and challenge

These themes are regularly incorporated into lessons and help to facilitate the progress of all our students.

7.2 Active Learning and Thinking

In Wootton Academy Trust Schools, active learning is valued and promoted.

Student-led tasks are prominent and "hands on" activities are encouraged to ensure full student engagement. Ideally, an 80/20 percentage balance between student activity and teacher talk is aimed for, in favour of student-led learning. Tasks are challenging and relevant to learning objectives. Students are actively engaged in activities that make them think about and comment upon information presented, rather than simply listening to the teacher talking. Students will analyse, synthesise and evaluate information through working regularly with other students.

Co-operative learning is a form of active learning where students work together to perform specific tasks in pairs or small groups (e.g. "think / pair / share" and reciprocal teaching activities) and this style of learning is prominent in our classrooms.

Paired work and peer assessment is used regularly in Wootton Academy Trust Schools and this presents significant learning opportunities through the use of dialogue. Students are encouraged to actively listen to the viewpoints of others and to offer their own opinions. They are expected to challenge each other constructively and to share, evaluate and develop individual and collective ideas.

Group work is encouraged across all levels of ability, supported by teacher intervention as appropriate to maintain momentum. Students are able to explore and develop their understanding of key issues and they are able to develop their oracy, as well as their social and team-working skills. Students are provided with opportunities to practise and learn from each other and to extend their decision-making and problem-solving skills. They are able to develop a sense of empathy and to understand the views of others.

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Group work is fully inclusive and groupings should be flexible and usually defined by the teachers to suit specific tasks. Students should be familiar with clear structures, rules and procedures and are aware that contributions are made, and listened to, by all group members.

Whole-class teacher explanations are concise and used to present and model key concepts and ideas and to demonstrate skills and processes. Effective explanation skills are used to engage and support students in active learning and higher order thinking. Teacher talk is used to establish interactive dialogue in which the teacher and students articulate ideas to develop knowledge and understanding, creating an appropriate level of support and challenge to enable students to make good progress.

7.3 Differentiation

Staff use differentiated activities to ensure that all students make progress in their learning. Individuality is recognised and the challenge of managing diversity is embraced. Differentiation addresses the individual needs of students through an appropriate range of resources, scaffolding and strategies. Teaching assistants and other adults should be actively involved in planning and differentiating lesson activities. Pupil Profile sheets are used to identify support d interventions for SEND and disadvantaged students.

Student targets underpin teaching and learning in lessons. Teachers must be aware of individual student needs and aim to match learning objectives, success criteria and lesson tasks to these needs. Differentiation strategies will be varied, uses scaffolding techniques, and based on prior assessment information and Pupil Profile Sheets.

Data-led classroom based interventions are the first strategy used to address under-achievement. Strategies used should initially focus on support within the classroom where a guided learning approach is encouraged, whereby small groups of students are targeted within a larger class. Teaching Assistants, where available, are used to facilitate this guided learning process. Teachers plan carefully to ensure that lessons fit into existing schemes of learning and enable the whole class to progress, not just the targeted group.

Teaching assistants are valued as an integral part of the lesson and their role is focussed on developing learning. Teachers and teaching assistants work in partnership to ensure that learning objectives are achieved by all groups of students. Ideally, teaching assistants are involved in the planning, and preparation of work.

7.4 Questioning to Promote Higher Order Thinking

Questioning is used regularly during all phases of lessons to promote higher order thinking skills. While many questions are planned, both individually and in sequences, some may be intuitive in response to a particular aspect of the lesson, or in order to address a perceived weakness during a lesson "*Bloom's Taxonomy*" is used to promote understanding at all levels, ranging from closed, factual questions to more divergent, stretching questions. At Wootton Academy Trust Schools, there is a focus on higher order questions in order to extend students by offering challenge and by presenting increased cognitive demands.

The strategy of 'cold calling' is to be used to ensure all students are thinking hard in lessons, and participate fully. Rather than hands up, students are to expect to be asked a question at any point in a lesson. Student exemptions will be identified on inclusion grids where applicable. Students are encouraged to develop their own oracy and questioning skills and to regularly ask questions of both their teachers and peer group. A climate is created where students feel safe to make mistakes and take risks in answering questions. A range of strategies are used to ensure a fully inclusive approach to questioning. *WalkThrus* strategies are also used to develop a range of questioning techniques.

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7.5 Marking and Feedback linked the marking and feedback policy of (WWW/EBI/MRI)

Formative assessment is an integral part of lesson delivery. Assessment for Learning is used regularly in lessons at Wootton Academy Trust Schools to promote student progress and to ensure that every child knows how they are performing and understands what they need to do to improve further. Through regular and targeted feedback parents / carers also know how their child is performing, the required improvements and how they can support their child in achieving their targets. Students must be given an opportunity to respond and react to teacher feedback. Tasks must give learners chance to refine their approach.

Six characteristics of AfL are evident in all our classrooms:

- **Learning objectives are shared with students**

Learning objectives are presented in student-friendly language and are embedded within lesson planning. Objectives should be used as a basis for questioning and feedback during plenaries throughout a lesson. All students must be clearly aware of the required learning in each lesson and can articulate this confidently and accurately when questioned. Students will know and recognise the standards they are aiming for.

- **Targets are aspirational in order to stretch students from the very start of their education at Wootton Academy Trust**

Students will be aware of their current and their targeted performance in all subjects (MEG - level or grade) and have clear success criteria. Students should be familiar with subject level descriptors and mark scheme criteria.

- **Students are involved in peer and self-assessment**

Students should be actively encouraged to reflect upon their work and to identify their personal strengths and weaknesses. They are encouraged to work closely with their peers (either in paired or group work activities) and to assess the performance of each other. Students focus on how to improve and analysis is based on clearly defined assessment criteria. Students are given time to reflect upon their learning.

- **Students are provided with feedback which leads to them recognising their next steps in learning and how to take them (EBI – Even Better If)**

AfL is provided using both verbal and written feedback which presents personalised information to enable all students to progress their learning. Feedback is supplied throughout lessons and provides constructive, specific guidance explaining what each student has done well, how to improve further and what needs to be done to make the required improvements.

- **Confidence is promoted that every student can improve (MRI - My Response Is)**

Teachers have high expectations of all their students and aim to build confidence and self-esteem by identifying small steps to enable students to see their progress. Students should be encouraged to improve their work, and to explain their thinking and reasoning within a secure classroom ethos.

- **Both teachers and students are involved in reviewing and reflecting on assessment information**

Robust assessment data will be used consistently to inform learning and progress judgments. Assessment data will also be shared regularly with students and used to identify areas of strength and weakness. Data will be used precisely to target the required next steps in learning. Where possible, assessment information should be shared on a one-to-one basis with students. As a result of reflective assessment practices, planning can be adjusted and tasks evaluated to ensure maximum impact.

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7.6 Literacy

Teachers will highlight the importance of subject specific literacy with pupils, the links between reading, writing and speaking and listening, to ensure progression in development in reading, writing, speaking and listening. Teachers will demonstrate high expectations over the standard and presentation of all written work. Assessment will include the marking of literacy, SPaG. Teachers in every subject are responsible for developing the literacy skills of all students. Effective planning should incorporate the explicit teaching and learning of literacy related skills. An emphasis is on supporting students to produce extended writing, through modelling, scaffolding and eventually independent work. Each year group reads a shared book collectively.

7.7 Pace and Challenge

Challenge and pace is necessary for progress in learning. To be outstanding, our students must be able to explain why they are doing an activity, what to do to improve and feel confident enough to take risks in learning. They must work with sufficient independence for the progress to be made permanent. Teachers have the key task, to assess accurately, the most appropriate level of challenge, pace and support for the different groups of learners within a class. Teachers have the task of mediating cognitive conflict so the learners are able to achieve resolution. Increasing challenge and pace involves adjusting the quality not necessarily the quantity of learning experiences. For learning to be challenging students should experience higher order thinking opportunities. That is; applying, analysing, transforming, synthesizing, creating or evaluating in addition to recalling and comprehending.

7.8 The Learning Environment

We aim to offer an inspirational and stimulating learning environment for all our students. Students are to understand why they are learning.

Our classrooms should be fully inclusive, recognising the abilities and aptitudes of each individual student. Students should feel empowered to make positive contributions to each lesson and genuinely believe that their contributions are valued. Students must not be afraid to take risks in their learning and will be encouraged to do so. Students should enjoy their lessons and have fun in the process of learning. Classroom displays will be up-to-date, relevant and accessible, designed to capture attention and generate interest. Students will be encouraged to produce their own work for display purposes.

Inclusive questioning methods are essential. The use of adequate thinking time before cold calling responses is essential. Conferring, discussion and refining answers should be promoted. Praise should be given for individual contributions and mistakes should be seen as excellent learning opportunities.

Classroom management procedures must be firmly established and students will be fully aware of classroom guidelines and routines; consequences and rewards should be used consistently and appropriately reflecting Wootton Academy Trust's Behaviour Policy. Seating plans, where appropriate, should be carefully considered to maximise learning potential. And these will be open to change to accommodate different types of work (e.g. group work) and individual student needs.

Staff should use positive language with students, and focus on developing positive mindsets. Teachers, where practical, should meet and greet students at the start of each lesson. Teacher should use the school behaviour management procedures and also Reprimand In Private, Praise In Public (RIP and PIP)

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7.9 Lesson Planning

Teachers are responsible for planning their lessons in order to maximise learning. A standard lesson planning template should be used for all observed lessons. (Ref. Appendix 1). Similarly, a standard lesson observation form is used for all formal observations.

Lesson plans must include learning objectives and intended learning outcomes for different groups of students (e.g. PP/ SEND / Gifted). Groups of students should be clearly identified on lesson plans and seating plans and opportunities for differentiation and assessment must be identified.

Teachers should understand how students learn in a particular subject. Planning involves understanding the learning steps involved and the potential barriers. It is essential that this is shared with our students - the learning process, and measures of student progress are made explicit in every lesson.

Objectives and outcomes should make cross-curricular links and seek to remove misconceptions. When planning learning, teachers should reflect on students' prior attainment and frame objectives and outcomes that link with those learning needs. Lesson plans should indicate how learning is being personalized for identified cohorts.

In the planning of learning, it may be necessary to differentiate expected learning outcomes for different groups of student over the course of the lesson, unit of work or key stage. We encourage all students to strive for the most challenging objectives. Outcomes should, where possible, link directly to grades or levels being worked towards.

Lesson plans are to incorporate opportunities for spaced retrieval practice so learning leads to a change in long term memory.

Lesson plans are to include activities for raising awareness of inclusion and diversity within the curriculum.

Students need to understand why they are learning, the wider purpose of studying a subject, and to develop a love of learning. This should be incorporate into lessons planning, to support the development of intrinsic motivation.

7.10 Lesson Structure

Lessons in Wootton Academy Trust Schools must have a clear and appropriate structure. Differentiated learning objectives will be highlighted within the lesson so that all groups of students are clear regarding the learning outcomes. Objectives will be shared with students in student- friendly language and referred to at an appropriate point during lessons.

Where appropriate, lessons will have an engaging starter activity which is used to connect with students and to establish the pace of the lesson. Starters should be interactive wherever possible and fully inclusive, enabling learners to link prior and future learning. Reflective plenaries should take place at appropriate points during lessons to assess learning and provide time for immediate reflection of key learning points. A summary plenary should take place at the end of each lesson to link learning objectives and intended learning outcomes for all groups of students.

7.11 Cross-curricular Skills

Literacy and numeracy must be promoted across the curriculum. Where opportunities present

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themselves, cross-curricular themes should be highlighted and literacy and numeracy skills should be explicitly identified, practised and developed.

IT is viewed as an integral part of the curriculum and used on a regular basis within lessons when appropriate to do so. IT will be used as a basis for independent learning, encouraging students to judge when and how to use IT media and to make accurate judgments regarding the reliability of IT based information. Students should be encouraged to use Teams to develop their independent learning skills.

8. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND POLICY REVIEW

The designated Deputy Head (Teaching & Learning) will collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments and action as appropriate.

The policy will be reviewed annually by Wootton Upper School Local Advisory Body.

Appendices

- 9.2.1 Lesson Planning Template
- 9.2.2 Lesson Observation Form
- 9.2.3 National Teacher Standards
- 9.2.4 Learning Walks form

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