

**Parkstone Grammar School**



**TEACHING AND LEARNING  
GUIDANCE HANDBOOK**



# TEACHING AND LEARNING GUIDANCE HANDBOOK

## INTRODUCTION

This booklet is designed to support the implementation of Parkstone Grammar School's Teaching and Learning Policy. Specifically it should provide:

- Guidance to all staff concerning the everyday expectations of them and their students as Teachers and Learners
- Guidance to Subject Leaders concerning the development of T&L in their subject areas in line with school policy
- Guidance to Subject Leaders and Line Managers about the characteristics of effective T&L, and how to achieve high standards of T&L
- Guidance to Subject Leaders and Line Managers on how to monitor, evaluate and improve standards of T&L

### 1. Expectations of All Teachers (see appendix 1)

All staff are expected to work at a level that matches the criteria outlined in the QTS 'Dimensions of Teaching'. These represent a minimum standard that all entrants to the profession must achieve during training in order to attain Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). In addition to this, staff are expected to display most of the 'Normal Practice' qualities outlined in Appendix 1, as well as setting themselves realistic and significant targets for their professional development and performance management/UPS progression

### 2. Expectations of Subject Leaders/Heads of Department

Subject leaders are expected to meet the standards as set out in the DfES 'National Standards for Subject Leaders'. Subject leaders must also ensure that the principles of normal and best practice in teaching and learning set out in this handbook are used as the basis for their departmental policies on teaching and learning, and their ongoing development plans. They are key staff in ensuring that what is set out in policy is applied effectively on a day to day, lesson to lesson basis.

### 3. Key Policies Linked to Teaching and Learning Policy

- ICT
- KS3 National strategy
- Assessment for Learning
- Assessment and Reporting
- School Curriculum and Timetabling
- Staffing
- ITT and NQT Induction & Training
- Pastoral care, discipline & Referral
- Rewards & Sanctions
- INSET/CPD
- Performance Management



#### 4. Essential Characteristics of Effective T&L Schemes

There is no single, uniform approach to producing effective subject T&L schemes. However, Heads of Department should use the following checklist when evaluating current schemes and the practice based upon them:

Does the T&L scheme contain:

- Opportunities for students to develop their literacy skills?
- Opportunities for students to develop/use their numeracy skills (where appropriate to the subject)?
- Effective and relevant use of ICT to enhance subject learning and skill development?
- Guidance on differentiation, including provision for Gifted and Talented students as well as students with learning difficulties ?
- Sufficient variety of activity to access – and develop - the various learning styles that students bring to the lessons?
- Opportunities to review progress through a variety of assessment techniques?

#### 5. The Role of Assessment in Successful T&L

**Formative assessment** (assessment for learning) should play a central role in the planning of schemes, lessons, topics or lesson sequences. At its most fundamental level, assessment is the only way that a teacher knows whether or not learning objectives have been achieved. Since every lesson has learning objectives, it must follow that every lesson will contain some form of assessment activity, even if it consists simply of a two minute plenary Q&A session at the end of the lesson.

Good formative use of assessment activity is also the only way that a student can find out what to do in order to progress towards targets set by the teacher (or student). This requires frequent feedback from the teacher through a variety of formal and informal methods.

Subject Leaders must ensure that their Departmental Assessment policies and systems reflect the importance of formative assessment, feedback and target setting.

It is therefore a key responsibility of every teacher to become – and remain – as familiar as possible with the developments and ideas relating to their subject concerning the techniques and philosophy of assessment for learning.

The Governing Body, through the Leadership team, will also therefore commit the necessary resources for the ongoing training and development of teaching staff to ensure that practice keeps pace with research and innovation in this field.

**Summative assessment** must be frequent and rigorous enough to ensure sufficient systematically recorded evidence exists to monitor progress and make predictions/set targets, based on National data such as MIDYIS/YELIS etc.

More detailed guidance on the importance of assessment is to be found in the school's Assessment Policy.



## 6. Monitoring and Evaluating T&L in Subject Areas

The subject leader has a duty both to the school leadership team and to teaching staff in their area, to monitor learning and teaching in order to ensure standards are high, and to facilitate the ongoing progress of their teams.

**As a guide, a subject leader should prioritise the following monitoring activities on a termly basis:**

- Lesson observation of all teachers in the subject area, using the expectations from appendix 1 to choose/agree on the focus of the observation
- Work sampling from a cross section of a Key stage
- Discussion of student progress through a key stage using assessment data from teachers in the subject area
- Feeding back to the Leadership team line manager on the outcomes of this monitoring process
- Consultation/feedback from a cross section of students with a focus on eg. a key stage or a pedagogical issue

Many subject leaders and their teams already exceed this expectation, to the benefit of their students' and their teachers' development. For new subject leaders, the approach to the activities listed above should be collegiate, supportive, and focussed on sharing and developing good practice. In appendix 3, 'Key Features of High Quality Teaching & Learning', there is a set of twelve features with criteria to help clarify how these features may be observed or what evidence of these features would look like.

**Subject leaders could use these descriptors for guidance when:**

- Observing lessons
- Advising colleagues about them observing the teaching of others
- Conducting a subject audit of Learning and Teaching
- Devising systems for departmental self-evaluation

**Further activity arising from this basic system could – and should – include**

- Modelling of best practice by team members. In other words, inviting observers to witness good practice and learn from the process
- Self evaluation of individual teachers; choosing an important or significant point in the term and encourage formal self evaluation of T&L during this period, in order to share the evaluations and develop practice as a result
- Team teaching

There is no doubt that many subject areas can add to this list, and one of the key purposes of this policy is to create an ethos for sharing good practice across subject areas.

## 7. Monitoring Activities for Departments and/or Whole School/Key Stage/Year Group

- **Discussions**
  - key questions to parents/carers
  - regular parents/carers focus group
  - brief questionnaire to parents/carers with follow up focus group
  - student council
  - cross-cutting pupil focus group
  - with individual pupils or groups of pupils in lessons
  - with subject leaders, individual teachers, focus group of teachers



- **Observation of lessons**
  - by senior managers, subject leaders, peers
  - only the starter, only the plenary
  - with a particular focus, for example, one of the key features
  
- **Documentation**
  - analysis and interpretation of pupil performance data
  - scrutiny of planning (short, medium and long term)
  - scrutiny of pupils work with a particular focus, for example, pupil self-assessment
  - policies and their impact on practice, for example, homework policy
  - home-school diaries
  - governing body minutes
  - curriculum plan analysis
  - evidence provided for appraisal, performance management and threshold applications
  - lesson observations and other monitoring documentation collected by others



## EXPECTATIONS OF TEACHERS AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

### NORMAL PRACTICE

1. Know and use students' first names.
2. Except where "discovery learning" is planned, share learning objectives with students
3. Take account of prior experience and knowledge
4. Emphasise links to what has gone before and forward to what is coming next.
5. Select appropriate resources
6. Use a variety of learning & teaching methods
7. Take account of students' concentration spans
8. Balance the amount of teacher- and student-talk so that students have opportunities to articulate (and therefore connect) their learning as they go along.
9. Adjust your teaching to suit the pace and depth of students' understanding
10. Check students' understanding at the end of the lesson so you can plan effectively for next time; in particular be prepared to think of alternative strategies for those who are struggling.
11. Communicate high expectations and insist on high standards and behaviour
12. Acknowledge students' relative strengths and achievements
13. Pay attention to the physical condition of the classroom
14. Set homework in line with school policy (see staff handbook for the School HW policy).
15. Assess students' learning in line with school policy (see staff handbook for the school assessment policy). As a minimum, offer all students regular formative feedback.
16. Aim to differentiate; as a minimum always have an extension task for students to move on to and a support strategy for those who are struggling.
17. Lesson preparation should be in line with both school curriculum policy, national curriculum requirements and departmental policies, schemes of work and guidance.
18. Keep adjusting your methods to bring them in line with recent research into the learning process; for example make use of learning styles research to guide your planning and delivery of varied learning strategies.



19. Deliberately work with students' misconceptions and half-understandings; bring them out into the open and challenge them (create cognitive conflict) – this is the basis of “cognitive acceleration”.
20. Make thinking skills a priority; recognise that they are promised through your personal technique (your questioning skills for example) as well as your clever design of students' tasks.
21. Value students' mistakes as they can lead to valuable learning opportunities; therefore, encourage students to “have a go” even when there is no guarantee of success.
22. Give instant feedback as far as is humanly possible.
23. Discuss learning with students to the extent that each of them is able to explain why they are doing a particular task, and has a clear idea of what they need to do in future to improve their personal performance.
24. Ask students to ask questions.
25. Promote “metacognition” which means helping students to recognise, name and understand a wide range of thinking and learning processes.
26. Challenge yourself to make learning personally appropriate for students, which means offering them different types of tasks, resources or support so they are all, individually, likely to succeed.
27. See yourself first and foremost as someone who manages the learning process – use a wide range of resources to deliver the content: videos; one-line resources; CD Roms; books; other students; posters; information sheets; students' “toolkits” .....

## **BEST PRACTICE**

1. Give student choices – let them select from a number of options the best way to tackle their learning; show them how to make wise decisions based on the awareness of themselves as learners.
2. Beyond giving them fixed choices, show students how to devise personal learning plans from scratch and carry them out independently.
3. Teach learners, systematically, the tools of the learning trade: time-management; self-discipline; notemaking; resource-management; planning; questioning; help-seeking; memorising; perseverance; interdependency; negotiation etc
4. Plan teaching to develop students' creativity. Value creativity in the assessment of students work.



## A PROFORMA FOR LESSON OBSERVATIONS

### LESSON OBSERVATION PROFORMA

Staff being observed : ..... Date : .....

Observer : .....

Context/limitations of the lesson (e.g. In Ch3, half group missing through a trip etc)

Learning Objectives are clearly expressed ? How ?

Strategies used to promote effective learning: Eg. Questioning Techniques/ Use of Assessment for Learning Strategies/ Variety of Activity and Purpose of Activity

Were the learning objectives achieved ?

How did the lesson 'feel'? eg. Rapport with students, purposeful 'buzz' in the room.

General comments/notes

Thank you for letting me observe this lesson.

Signed : .....



## KEY FEATURES OF HIGH QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING

<b>Excellence and enjoyment in teaching and learning include these features:</b>	<b>Excellence and enjoyment in learning will be evident when:</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
1. Learners are motivated to learn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The majority of learners are actively engaged in learning</li><li>• Learners ask their own questions about the content being learnt</li><li>• Learners understand the reason why they are learning something</li><li>• Learners are given challenging tasks</li><li>• Learners persevere in order to complete the task and are confident that they will have success through learning, teaching and effort</li><li>• Learners seek feedback</li><li>• Learners work together</li><li>• Parents/carers receive regular feedback about their child's progress</li></ul>	
2. Learners learn with the support of others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learning interaction is with a range of people including the teacher</li><li>• Learning is integrated with support from home, and parents/carers play an active role in supporting their child's learning</li><li>• Learners are keen to work with others</li><li>• Talk between learners is concentrated on the content of the lesson or their ideas about it</li><li>• Learners have co-operative skills</li><li>• Conflicts are resolved by the learners themselves</li><li>• All learners learn in their group and all are successful in making progress through working with peers</li><li>• There is no predominance of competitiveness</li></ul>	



<b>Excellence and enjoyment in teaching and learning include these features:</b>	<b>Excellence and enjoyment in learning will be evident when:</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
<p>3. The learners are aware of their own attainment, their learning approaches and have plans for how these can be improved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners' descriptions of their performance, following learning and assessment, closely match the performance itself</li> <li>• Learners are aware of the difficulties they are experiencing or have experienced during learning and are willing to discuss these</li> <li>• Learners place a value on review and reworking, as part of a journey towards mastery and achievement</li> <li>• Lessons are long enough for learners to achieve the level of success they are aiming for or to assess their learning</li> <li>• Learners attribute their own success, and that of others, to effort</li> <li>• Parents/carers are informed of their child's attainment, their learning approach and the plans in place for them to progress</li> <li>• Learners are aware of these aspects of their learning: how they can succeed in areas of the curriculum in which they are not making progress; the targets for which they have to aim; their potential attainment if they continue to make good progress from their prior attainment</li> </ul>	
<p>4. Learners communicate what has been attained and how it was attained</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners can see a use for the learning they are doing</li> <li>• Learners are willing to share what they have learnt</li> <li>• There are opportunities in reviews of lesson plans to apply ideas and skills and thus prompt learners to think about the efficacy of their learning</li> <li>• Parents/carers are actively engaged in reviewing their child's progress</li> </ul>	



<b>Excellence and enjoyment in teaching and learning include these features:</b>	<b>Excellence and enjoyment in learning will be evident when:</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
<p>5. Learners value being taught and recognise that they can learn independently</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners do not need to interrupt their learning by continually asking for help or seeking confirmation that they are doing the right thing</li> <li>• Learners are busy from the start of lessons, during lessons and keep learning to the end of lessons</li> <li>• Learners persevere when faced with learning difficulties even when they meet these at home doing homework</li> <li>• Teachers do not need to keep reminding learners of the consequences of not completing course/homework</li> <li>• Learners attempt new tasks that are challenging because the context has changed or because previous learning has to be applied</li> <li>• Parents/carers support schools with homework policies and practice</li> </ul>	
<p>6. The school uses the time available for teaching to best effect, reflecting school priorities whilst protecting learner's interests</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Governing Body has a curriculum/teaching and learning policy that sets out the principles for the curriculum provision and has reviewed or monitored this recently</li> <li>• There is a clear long term plan and complete curricular coverage</li> <li>• There is a medium term plan with timescale, intended outcomes, starting points, anticipated activities and approaches to assessment</li> <li>• Medium term plans show the contribution made to the broader curriculum, especially literacy and numeracy</li> <li>• There is a well planned whole school curriculum which gives teachers time to teach it</li> <li>• The homework policy and homework set match each other and support new and applied learning</li> </ul>	



Excellence and enjoyment in teaching and learning include these features:	Excellence and enjoyment in learning will be evident when:	Evidence
<p>7. Those helping learning have good subject knowledge that they can use in the areas they teach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers' and teaching assistants' professional specialist qualifications match their teaching commitments</li> <li>• Learning outcomes prepared by teachers and shared with teaching assistants are precise and have these key features: coverage of knowledge and skills; describe the context, content or performance criteria towards which learners will work; give scope for a range of performance up to and including the highest probable learning outcome</li> <li>• Teachers and teaching assistants are aware of common subject specific learning difficulties, for example common misconceptions</li> <li>• Teachers' subject knowledge is sufficient, in their view, to teach the subject and teaching assistant's subject knowledge is sufficient to support learning the subject</li> <li>• Teachers and teaching assistants can see how an idea might progress toward the learning outcome</li> <li>• Teachers are familiar with the pedagogical knowledge and skills that define the subject they teach and can include these within the learning outcomes</li> </ul>	
<p>8. What learners can do within the curriculum is valued and is used as the starting point for what is taught</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a plan in place to find out what the learners can already do</li> <li>• What learners can do is incorporated into future plans for teaching</li> <li>• The learners have had a chance to recall what they can and cannot do</li> <li>• Learners are comfortable or confident in asking questions related to their learning</li> <li>• Parents/carers share their views of their child's progress with teachers</li> </ul>	



<b>Excellence and enjoyment in teaching and learning include these features:</b>	<b>Excellence and enjoyment in learning will be evident when:</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
9. Teaching maintains a pace that continues to challenge and motivate so that learners make good progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Targets set for learners are challenging compared with prior attainment</li><li>• The type of activities and the range of challenges they present are above that already indicated by the learners' prior attainment</li><li>• The pace of learning is such that learners make progress to achieve realistic targets</li><li>• Learning objectives are set at a sufficiently high level to provide a continuing challenge for all learners, even the most able</li><li>• Expectations are communicated effectively through the learning intentions and the process of teaching, and demonstrated through examples of learners' work (outcomes)</li><li>• Parents/carers are aware of teacher expectations of their child and compliment and support these</li></ul>	
10. The variety within teaching brings about interest and engagement so that learners make good progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lesson planning and delivery demonstrates a wide range of activities are being used</li><li>• The teacher gives learners the chance to think actively about how to do tasks and activities</li><li>• Lessons avoid a monotonous pattern that learners recognise early on and associate with boredom or difficulty</li><li>• Children and their parents/carers feel able to discuss, activities and lessons they have taken part in</li></ul>	



<b>Excellence and enjoyment in teaching and learning include these features:</b>	<b>Excellence and enjoyment in learning will be evident when:</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
<p>11. Learners are assessed against standards they would recognise</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupil outcomes are exemplified and demonstrated to the learners</li> <li>• References to national standards and attainment benchmarks are accurate and shared with learners</li> <li>• Teachers have sufficient knowledge of local and national standards such as grade criteria and level descriptions to be able to gauge attainment</li> <li>• There is a wide range of assessment strategies used and sufficient planned assessments</li> <li>• Use is made of school data on prior attainment</li> <li>• Teacher assessments are in-line with test results</li> <li>• Reviews of feedback given to learners show that the following features are common: comments predominate rather than marks; pupil self-assessment; feedback refers to criteria made clear at the start of the work; feedback on progress gives advice on how to improve; some feedback comes from peers and parents/carers; learners respond to the feedback given by modifying later work</li> <li>• Parents/carers understand assessment processes and how their child's progress is reviewed and monitored and feel actively involved in this process as key partners</li> </ul>	
<p>12. Teachers regularly reflect on evidence of pupil motivation, engagement and progress and use this to develop their teaching</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lesson observations and other reviews of teacher activity are providing the teacher with an opportunity to reflect on evidence of engagement, motivation and pupil progress</li> <li>• The teacher is regularly and actively seeking feedback from learners and parents/carers</li> <li>• The teacher has professional development targets linked to pupil progress</li> <li>• Teachers undertake action research to develop their practice</li> </ul>	