



### 3a TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

Queen Mary's is an inclusive school which aims to promote effective teaching and learning in every classroom. The most recent Educational Inspection of 2017 stated that Queen Mary's "strives for excellence and to create independent young people who love life and enjoy learning. It seeks to enhance pupils' character and build their resilience." The main recommendations in regards to teaching and learning were that Queen Mary's should; "provide more consistent challenge for pupils, including greater opportunities for independent learning and drawing on a wider range of teaching strategies and more consistent use of marking, so that the pupils maximise their achievements."

This vision for a teaching and learning policy is one which will standardise the way staff plan and deliver lessons so that pupils can make better progress and achieve their potential whilst enjoying their school experience.

#### Philosophy

At Queen Mary's all teachers and teaching assistants are committed to providing high quality teaching and learning in all lessons and activities during the school day. We believe that effective planning; immediate, short term and long term will mean we are successful in creating the context within which pupils will be able to learn most effectively. Queen Mary's is committed to ensuring that all pupils become lifelong learners, whilst also equipping them with the key skills for learning in our ever changing technological world. Technology is used across the curriculum to support and enhance learning. We aim to ensure that all teachers will follow the same aims and practices and that these can be monitored using the school systems of department reviews and appraisal.

The principles behind this policy lie in the concept of what makes an excellent teacher. Researchers have developed many ideas over the years, and this policy will be underpinned by the idea that an outstanding teacher shares the same five characteristics;

1. 'Excellent teachers' will love their subject and have excellent subject knowledge. Good subject knowledge matters not only because at the top of the ability range you need to be able to stretch pupils but also because teachers with good knowledge tend to make lessons for younger children more interesting. They have more substance to be interesting about.
2. 'Excellent teachers' have the right personality. Pupils should be able to respect them because they are in control of their own learning environment. Discipline is always maintained without

fear. They should also be hardworking, passionate about the school, highly organised and want their pupils to reach their potential.

3. 'Excellent teachers' must have certain classroom skills. They need to be able to deliver a lesson with pace and interest, understand how to use digital resources effectively, how to mark work and record those marks, how to write reports, how best to teach tricky concepts, how to ask questions of pupils in the most effective way. Effective teachers use facts as a starting point, not an end point; they ask "why" questions, look at all sides and encourage pupils to predict what will happen next. They ask questions frequently to make sure students are following along. They try to engage the whole class, and they don't allow a few pupils to dominate the class. They keep pupils motivated with varied, lively approaches.
4. 'Excellent teachers' will set high expectations for their pupils. They will be determined that every pupil will master their subject to the best of their own ability, and they never give up on underachievers.
5. 'Excellent teachers' form strong relationships with their pupils and show that they care about them as people. They are warm, accessible, enthusiastic and caring. Teachers with these qualities are known to stay after school and make themselves available to pupils and parents who need them. They are involved in school-wide committees and activities, and they demonstrate a commitment to the school. They will communicate frequently with parents. They don't hesitate to pick up the phone or email parents if they are concerned about a pupil or simply want to praise them.

## Policy

Teaching and Learning falls into two main groups: planned and unplanned. Teachers and Teaching Assistants should be mindful of this in all that the school does both in and out of the classroom. Learning is a life-long activity, and learning that takes place at Queen Mary's should provide the essential foundation for all pupils as they move into the next phase of their education post-16. CPD will always be integral to provision of continuous and sustained school improvement in line with the School Development Plan. Training will be provided through staff inset on training days and through external providers.

### EACH TEACHER WILL:

- Build and maintain positive relationships with pupils based on mutual trust, respect and dignity so that they are confident to make mistakes and to learn.
- Understand and plan for the individual needs of each pupil in the group including those with SEND and the more able.
- Demonstrate relevant subject knowledge and understanding in the way they present and discuss the subjects being taught.
- Ensure lessons have pace, engage pupils and have clear learning outcomes.
- Challenge and inspire pupils and expect positive outcomes from them.

- Use a variety of teaching methods to enable all pupils to learn effectively including digital resources and new technology.
- Assess pupils' work thoroughly and use assessments to plan the next steps in learning using a consistent marking and assessment policy.
- Set individual pupil targets and review them each term through the use of learning conversations.
- Set high expectations throughout each lesson or activity.
- Use praise and encouragement which helps to raise attainment and self-esteem ensuring each pupil feels valued.
- Arrive promptly to lessons to ensure an efficient start.
- Develop and maintain positive parent relationships to support pupils in their learning.

Where appropriate, TEACHING ASSISTANTS WILL:

- Be an integral part of the class and build and maintain positive relationships with the pupils based on mutual trust, respect and dignity so that they are confident to make mistakes and to learn.
- Be proactive and diligent in fulfilling their specific duties and responsibilities.
- Support the teacher in planning for the individual needs of each pupil in the group if required.
- Support the teacher in the assessment, recording and reporting of pupils' achievements if required.
- Challenge and inspire pupils to ensure they achieve their potential.

PUPILS WILL:

- Follow/respond to the school and class rules/expectations.
- Listen to the teacher, teaching assistants (if appropriate) and other pupils within their learning environment.
- Communicate with confidence about their own work and ideas and develop skills for peer and self-assessment.
- Work at a good pace appropriate to their individual ability.
- Show interest in their work and be able to maintain appropriate concentration at their own level.
- Develop the confidence to think and learn with increasing levels of independence.
- Demonstrate an understanding of what they are doing, reflect on how well they have done in previous lessons and how they can improve and make progress.
- Be punctual to lessons and have good attendance.
- Display resilience when things do not go to plan.
- Understand that all pupils have an entitlement to learn.
- Meet deadlines as far as possible with homework and other tasks assigned by the teacher.
- Contribute to the wider aspects of life at Queen Mary's including extracurricular activities, educational visits and community projects.
- Ensure that they are correctly equipped for each lesson.

It is generally agreed that pupils are more likely to learn effectively when they see learning as both enjoyable and rewarding. They can achieve best if they are clear about what they are trying to achieve and how their work can be improved each lesson. They will work effectively in a well organised and accessible room that they feel comfortable and happy in. They will make good progress if they are given prompt and appropriate feedback as well as praise for their efforts and achievements. Pupils will respond well if they feel supported and valued whilst also being encouraged to demonstrate required levels of independence.

Conversely, pupils are likely to be ineffective in their learning if they are uncertain about what they are supposed to be doing or unclear about the style in which they are expected to learn. Pupils do not learn well in an environment where they feel worried or uncomfortable about the teacher/TA or their peers' response to their efforts or work. Pupils do not enjoy or learn effectively when occupied by purposeless teaching or activities which do not advance their learning such as copying information they do not understand or see a reason behind. Pupils find it difficult to cope in situations where they find the work too hard, too easy or too restricting or not being clear about what they need to do to improve.

## Summary

At Queen Mary's we aim to develop teaching and learning to ensure that we stand as a competitive independent school. Excellent teaching and learning will promote the idea that alongside academic achievement all pupils will become lifelong learners who develop skills that will enhance their own future. We aim to ensure that all pupils can become;

- Independent
- Flexible
- Engaged with their community
- Effective leaders and team players
- Focused on excellence within their own capabilities
- Resilient
- Responsible for their own learning journey

For teaching and learning to be effective there needs to be a consistency of approach amongst all staff. This should not limit individual creativity or impact on individual teaching styles or teachers' personalities, but stand as a basis from which teaching and learning can become and remain excellent.

## Assessment for Learning

Queen Mary's should be using Assessment for Learning (AfL) across the whole school regularly. AfL will be used as a means of supporting excellent teaching and learning in collaboration with the Assessment and Marking Policy and use of data. AfL within the classroom will ensure that all pupils understand their level of knowledge and skills. AfL is a useful tool to raise pupil achievement and improve motivation. It is based on the idea that pupils will make progress if they understand the aim

and purpose of their learning, where they are in relation to this aim and how they can achieve this aim. Feedback must focus on how pupils can improve in relation to a target following the agreed school Principles of Marking.

## The Role of Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians should feel that Queen Mary's actively encourages them to play a part in their child's learning.

Parents/guardians will be informed of their child's learning through;

- Letters, newsletters and information evenings
- Parent Evenings
- Tutor feedback/review evenings
- Communication through teaching and pastoral staff.

To support learning we would encourage parents/guardians to;

- Ensure that their child's attendance and punctuality is satisfactory.
- Check and sign their child's planner to ensure that prep is completed regularly.
- Support their child with prep where appropriate without interfering with the aims of the school in developing effective learners.
- Ensure their child is well equipped for learning.
- Communicate directly with school if they have any concerns about their child's education.

Susan Casey

Assistant Head Teaching and Learning

Review Date: July 2021

Next Review date: July 2022

Linked documents:

- The Learning Support Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Subject Schemes of work
- Departmental Handbooks
- Departmental Self Evaluation Files
- Principles of Marking Document
- The Prep Protocol
- Pupil Profiles
- The Fundamental British Values Policy