



The  
**Holy Spirit**  
Catholic Multi Academy

*'With grace and humility, glorify the Lord by your life.'*

# Teaching & Learning Policy

This policy applies to St Thomas More Catholic Academy & Sixth Form College part of The Holy Spirit Catholic MAC

This Teaching & Learning Policy has been approved and adopted by The Holy Spirit MAC on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Policy Ratified on: 12<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Signed by the Chair of the  
Education Standards  
Committee

Signed by the Principal

Next Review: July 2022



## TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

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### Statement of Intent

At St Thomas More Catholic Academy we believe that learning is the process by which students 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 and it stems from the school's aims, ethos and vision. We expect all of our staff to deliver high quality, stimulating and dynamic lessons, where all students are supported and challenged to make good progress in their learning.

Students of all ability levels will be given equal opportunities to learn in order to achieve their full potential. Our purpose is to create a learning environment which fosters motivation and allows all students to flourish. We strive not to simply teach knowledge but to empower our students by teaching them how to learn.

### Aims:

- To provide a personalised learning experience for every child that takes full account of their individual needs', interests and aspirations.
- To ensure that our students are active and independent learners who strive to achieve their best in every learning situation and will continue to do so throughout their lives.
- To ensure that students 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 students do outside the classroom.
- To focus upon continual raising standards of teaching and learning in the school, to inspire and motivate students 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 as a consequence.

### Objectives of policy

This policy exists to clarify what we see as best practice and to clarify the expectations the school has for staff and students to ensure that all our students learn well in every lesson.

### Principles of policy

#### Staff will:

- support and challenge students to achieve their best
- provide high quality, dynamic and stimulating lessons
- provide high levels of interaction for all pupils
- provide regular and meaningful home learning
  
- provide opportunities and guidance to apply and develop literacy, numeracy and other skills
- encourage and support
- provide high quality feedback
- work collaboratively to ensure consistency in skill development by identifying and sharing best practice in teaching and learning across all areas of the curriculum
- develop our range of teaching and learning styles to create an exciting and creative learning culture

- ✓ listen to students' views and be open to their opinions
- ✓ evaluate and reflect on their practice.

**Students will:**

- participate fully in lessons
- strive for continual improvement
- support each other (and their teacher) so that all learn effectively
- take an active part in learning within and beyond the classroom
- take pride in developing and applying their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum
- be enthusiastic, resilient and responsible in learning and improving skills
- respond positively to feedback and improve their work as a result of effective feedback
- rise to challenges, working collaboratively and supportively.

**Procedure****Planning and Preparation:**

- ✓ All teachers should plan lessons that allow all pupils to progress in their learning
- ✓ Learning Outcomes should be evident and clear to the students. Success Criteria must be made explicit to all students
- ✓ The lesson should have a structure which will typically be based around the STM lesson- 'The six steps to success'
- ✓ A variety of learning activities should be planned, taking into account the individual needs of the students
- ✓ The use of resources, including ICT, must be carefully planned to enhance learning.
- ✓ A variety of active questioning techniques should be used and, where possible questions should be pre-planned
- ✓ All teachers should have an in depth knowledge and understanding of the scheme of work / exam specification they are teaching.

**Teaching:**

- ✓ Positive behaviour for learning strategies should be used with a classroom ethos of praise and encouragement. Merits should be actively awarded where appropriate. Faculties must adhere to the school behaviour policy whilst always considering the restorative nature of the policy.

At Saint Thomas More Catholic Academy students and teachers will follow the six steps to success as outlined below.



**St. Thomas More Catholic Academy**  
**Six Steps to Success**  
**2020-21**

**1. Silent, independent application**

Students will work independently and in silence every lesson unless there is a good reason for them not to. In doing so, it allows each student to focus on their personal achievement and it will ensure that assessment information is accurate. This reflects what each student is capable of when applying their learning independently. There is an expectation that the work a student produces is better than their previous work. Always ensure that work is completed to a standard in line with the students' ability and address presentation and punctuation issues. The expectation is that a student must re-do the work where this is not the case.

**2. Less annotation, more written application**

Focus on developing students' ability to apply their learning in writing, as they will be required to do in an exam. Sufficient opportunities will have been put in place for students to learn from annotating models, so **now** we want to put this learning into action by **ending every lesson with a written application/exam question**.

**3. Application- revision at home**

Revision needs to happen during lessons and planning needs to allow adequate time to cover previous learning. Revision at home will be treated as a bonus but we will not assume that each student's success relies on their work outside school. Encourage students to complete revision on a concept they have misunderstood in their lesson(s). Remember to highlight a particular revision need within a student's work to focus their revision - use the **'Revision'** stamp!

**4. Reduce teacher talk to a maximum of 10 minutes wherever possible**

Whole class input should be kept to a minimum and instead, teachers can quietly provide input to individuals and small groups of students while the rest of the class works silently and independently. Knowledge tests at the start of each lesson should last no longer than 10 minutes.

**5. Students must catch up on work missed**

Where a student misses a lesson due to 3 or more days of absence, work must be given to the learning mentor and the learning mentor will endeavor to ensure it is completed.

**6. Assessment for Learning**

Following an assessment, ensure appropriate AFL is in place to identify key misconceptions. These should be addressed as part of individual/group or whole class interventions in subsequent lessons.

## **Lesson expectations**

To support the six steps to success strategy and to establish effective routines consistently across the school, students and teachers are required to follow the lesson protocol as outlined below.

### **Entry and Exit Routines Lesson Protocol**

#### **Entry routine**

- 1) Teacher is at the front of the room to meet and greet.
- 2) Teacher formally welcomes the class with a smile and a positive approach.
- 3) Students enter in silence and stand behind their chairs (Use the 3-2-1 countdown rule to settle students if required).
- 4) Students should get their books and equipment ready to start the lesson.
- 5) Students are seated. If there is any delay in setting up, the students review previous work.

#### **Exit routine**

- 1) Students pack away quietly and stand behind their desks for orderly dismissal in silence.
- 2) Students should be praised for working hard. Issue merits where appropriate to reward students.
- 3) Each student should take responsibility for the area where they are seated, they need to look under the desk and the surrounding area to make sure all litter is in the bin
- 4) Make sure that all stationery is returned to the box including glue sticks, pens, pencils etc.
- 5) Make sure the tables are straight and chairs are put under the tables
- 6) Any resources such as booklets, print outs and text books are put away
- 7) Exercise books returned to the box
- 8) Ensure the teacher desk is tidy with no mugs left behind
- 9) Log off PC for the next teacher

## Assessment & marking

- Teachers should assess pupils' work regularly, according to the schools assessment, marking and feedback framework (currently under review June 2021).
- Staff should use analysis of assessments and tracking data to inform their teaching and to structure intervention strategies.
- Effective use of data is critical to inform students, parents and other staff of pupil progress towards targets.

## Tracking student progress

All staff have the responsibility to regularly and accurately assess each student's achievement and to track their progress made against individual target grades. **This is reported to parents termly in interim assessments.** All teachers will identify students in their class in need of additional support, including vulnerable groups such as pupil premium students, SEN students and the most able and a put in place appropriate intervention where it is needed.

All Faculty leaders and pastoral leaders have the responsibility to monitor assessment across their Faculty or year group, to analyse data using SISRA, to identify individuals or groups who are making less progress than expected, and to intervene where necessary to ensure students get back on track.

Review of teaching and learning is on-going and regular, and will involve:

- Performance management
- Curriculum audit
- Lesson observations
- Learning Walks
- Work scrutiny
- Student voice

## Feedback:

1. Feedback will be given as soon as possible, within 5 working days. Written feedback will be given on the lesson observation form.
2. Feedback will be honest and clear, setting out strengths and areas for development.
  - To make secure judgements of teaching and learning across the school
  - To monitor and evaluate the progress of students during a lesson and over time
  - To judge and evaluate the performance of individual teachers against the Teacher Standards and check that high standards of professional performance are established and maintained
  - To identify group and individual training needs across the teaching and support staff, with a particular focus on developing our NQT's with a tailored programme of support

At St Thomas More Catholic Academy, our staff:

- Support and challenge students to achieve their best
- Provide high quality, dynamic and stimulating lessons
- Provide high levels of interaction for all pupils
- Listen to students' views and are open to their opinions
- Evaluate and reflect on their practice
- Provide regular and meaningful home learning.
- Provide opportunities and guidance to apply and develop literacy, numeracy and other skills
- Encourage and support
- Provide high quality feedback
- Work collaboratively to ensure consistency in skill development by identifying and sharing best practice in T&L across all areas of the curriculum.
- Develop our range of T&L styles to create an exciting and creative learning culture.

Teachers are responsible for the progress of all students in their classes and for evaluating their own performance and professional development.

This can be achieved by:

- Self-evaluation of their own subject knowledge and understanding of changing educational initiatives.
- Self-evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of their own teaching and classroom management
- Monitoring student progress to ensure they achieve well against prior achievement and similar groups nationally.

Reviews of T&L will take place on an on-going basis and will involve:

- Management of performance over time in line with the Teacher Standards, by their Line Manager.
- Lesson observations conducted by members of the Senior Leadership Team and/or line manager.
- Learning walks on a regular basis.
- Work scrutiny within lessons, samples requested for monitoring within the guidance of the marking and assessment framework.
- Student voice within lessons or as part of a sub group to capture voice and provide evidence for T&L audit.

## **Protocols**

At St Thomas More Catholic Academy, we have an agreed format for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning for the **management of performance** over time, in line with the Teacher Standards. This will consist of the following classroom visits per academic year:

- **Two formal lesson observations**
- **Three learning walks, each no more than 20 minutes, conducted by senior leaders.**

Additional informal learning walks will be conducted during the academic year. The sole purpose of

## **Feedback:**

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2. Feedback will be honest and clear, setting out strengths and areas for development. these monitoring learning walks is to allow senior and middle leaders to evaluate the performance of their teams and monitor the progress of students within their charge for review, audit and planning purposes.

In this school, teachers' lessons will be observed on an appropriate and reasonable number of occasions based on individual circumstances of the teacher (for example NQTs, staff in need of additional support, staff on development programmes). The number of observations will be in accordance with the school management of performance policy, which includes provision for circumstances where concerns have been raised about a teacher's performance. (ASCL guidance)

## **Protocols for Lesson Observations (including joint observations)**

### **During the lesson:**

1. Teachers may expect to be observed for part of, or a whole lesson. Each observation will be for at least 25 minutes.
2. Lesson observations will not be graded.
3. The observer may need to talk to student or look at their work as part of the self-evaluation process.
4. Evidence: register, seating plan, identified cohorts, SEN information, marking and assessment tracking data, will be used as part of the monitoring and evaluation process and should be available at all times and provided by the class teacher.
3. Lesson observation forms will be stored centrally to inform the T&L audit trail and management of performance. Targets set from the previous observation will be carried forward for review. If the observation is linked to a specific objective from your appraisal the teacher should be reminded of this by the observer. The purpose is twofold – to review progress and to identify areas for support for coming year.
4. Measuring progress in the lesson and overtime – use of student work scrutiny, tracking data, student voice. Lesson observation will take into account progress over time.
5. Lesson observation sheets will be stored in the PM overview folder and will be shared with the relevant senior and middle leaders.

## **Learning Walks**

### **Protocol for learning walks (including senior leadership learning walks, joint learning walks and middle leader learning walks)**

The purpose of the classroom visit is to obtain a brief snapshot of the classroom in order to collect evidence based on the specific T&L focus. Learning walks are a powerful tool to observe and develop common trends in classrooms and to audit typicality.

#### **During the learning walk:**

- Senior and middle leaders will conduct learning walks as part of the self-evaluation process.
- Learning walks will be used to quality assure school and department policies and will be recorded in self-evaluation documents (SEFs).
- Learning walks will not result in lessons being graded.
- There will typically be short or no notice of learning walks.

**Feedback:**

1. Feedback will be given as soon as possible, within 5 working days. Written feedback will be given on the lesson observation form.
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1. Feedback will be given as soon as possible, within 5 working days. Written feedback will be given on the learning walk form via email or paper copy.
2. Feedback will be honest and clear, setting out strengths and areas for development.

### Work Scrutiny

#### **Protocol for work scrutiny (including classwork, , coursework, controlled assessment, internal exams)**

The purpose of the work scrutiny is to monitor and evaluate the progress of student cohorts within lessons or as part of a sub group, and capture evidence of typicality of teaching and learning across the school community. Work scrutiny is a powerful tool to observe and develop common trends in learning, teaching, marking, assessment and feedback.

#### During work scrutiny:

- Senior and middle leaders will conduct work scrutiny as part of the self-evaluation process. This may occur within lessons or as a sample requested for monitoring within the guidance of the marking and assessment framework.
- Work scrutiny will be used to quality assure school, faculty policies and standard operating procedures and will be recorded in **self evaluation documents (SEFs)**.
- Written or verbal feedback will be given.
- There will typically be short notice of work scrutiny.

### Feedback:

1. Feedback will be given as soon as possible, within 5 working days. Written feedback will be given on the work scrutiny form.
2. Feedback will be honest and clear, setting out strengths and areas for development.

#### Evidence will be:

- Feedback – formative comments and advice/targets on each substantial work assessed with grades/levels where appropriate
- Literacy/Numeracy: Use of whole school literacy framework/numeracy framework
- Progress: Do students learn from their mistakes and modify their work?
- Challenge and expectation – books orderly with work complete
- Presentation - high expectations of handwriting and presentation
- Variety of activities/ resources to support learning.

## **Student Voice**

### **Protocol:**

This research information is used to capture feedback from our school community and inform planning, monitoring and evaluation, across student cohorts, the academic and pastoral curriculums at Saint Thomas More Catholic Academy. Evidence will focus on:

- Do students feel they are listened to?
- Do they have any say in how the school is run and in how their learning is organised?
- Do students have opportunities to take on leadership roles, to express their ideas publicly and to be consulted on major changes?

The monitoring and evaluation of the Teaching and Learning Policy is linked directly to the following school documents:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Marking, assessment and feedback Framework
- CPD Policy
- Performance Management Policy
- Lesson Expectation Framework

## **Continuous Professional Development**

We are committed to providing high quality CPD through a structured programme of events and opportunities throughout the CPD school calendar.

Teachers should:

- Continuously update their subject knowledge and teaching practice in line with current developments and initiatives;
- Discuss learning and teaching in Department Development time in order to share good practice;
- Plan their own CPD programme in conjunction with their Line Manager as a result of the self-evaluation process and by reflecting on the Teacher's Standards document.

## **Implementation of policy**

The implementation of this policy is supported by the following frameworks and documents:

Professional standards for teachers – DFE

Appraisal policy

Continued professional development policy

Lesson expectations

Non-negotiables for lessons Home

learning framework Assessment and

marking framework

## **Responsibilities**

**The Governors (Teaching and Learning Group)** are responsible, in consultation with Senior Leadership Team for establishing the policy for the promotion of high quality lessons and for reviewing it at the appointed review date.

**The Assistant Headteachers (Teaching and Learning)** are responsible for leading the development teaching and learning across the school.

**The Teaching and Learning Leadership Team** is responsible for the development of teaching and learning across the school.

**The Senior Leadership Team** is responsible for teaching and learning, with the implementation and day-to-day management of the policy and procedures. They will monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the whole school and offer support and training to maintain high standards.

**Subject Leaders** are responsible for ensuring the curriculum meets learner needs, standard operating procedures are implemented across the department, monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning, providing support and training to develop teaching and learning across their department, and tracking the progress of students.

**All staff** are responsible for applying the school's teaching and learning policy and procedures to provide high quality learning experiences for all students.

#### **Evaluation and development of policy**

The policy will be developed through consultation with staff, students and governors.

#### **Review cycle of policy**

This policy will be reviewed by the Governors (Teaching and Learning Committee) in accordance with the school's review cycle.