



TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

| Mount St Joseph Document Control Table | | | |
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| Document History | | |
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| Version | Date | Notes on Revisions |
| 1.0 | June 2020 | |
| 1.1 | July 2021 | Minor editing adjustments; removal of changes due to COVID. |
| 1.2 | July 2022 | Updates to the expectations (Pedagogical principles), Quality Assurance and the forms that will be used for Quality Assurance and formal observations highlighted in the appendices. |
| 1.3 | July 2023 | Minor amendments |
| 1.4 | May 2024 | Amendments surrounding frequency of marking, home learning and instructional coaching |
| 1.5 | July 2025 | Amendments to lesson structure, training sessions |

Extract from the School Mission Statement

"As a Roman Catholic School – Mount St Joseph strives to be a community of learners, believers and friends.

As a community of learners, we aspire to achieve our full, academic potential in a happy, safe and caring environment.

As a community of believers, we aim to develop a full awareness of our spiritual and moral responsibility and a deepening love and understanding of our faith.

As a community of friends, we influence the people around us by using our unique gifts and talents to develop one another socially and culturally to build a better world."

Rationale – Intent:

Mount St Joseph is committed to ensuring that all students have the best possible education. It is a fundamental belief of Catholicism that we strive for excellence in all we do. Working in a Catholic school it is our moral and professional duty to strive for outstanding teaching. Our students are at the centre of everything we do. In order to provide the very best for them – education, safe space, and potential future - teaching and learning must be at the heart of the school; helping to form a positive community of learners, believers and friends. We are committed to providing a learning environment in which all students are engaged and challenged by teaching that is consistently of a high quality and is inspiring, engaging and challenging whilst being fully supported by excellent pastoral care. We believe that a truly outstanding school is about more than academic achievement: it is about developing the whole student. Creating young people who are passionate about their own education and futures; who are resilient and mindful; who are independent and confident; and who are able to make positive progress during their time at Mount St Joseph.

Rationale – Implementation:

As a school, we want to ensure that teaching staff set high expectations; lessons are rigorous and purposefully structured to ensure maximum engagement. We focus on making sure that learners are engaged, taking an active role in their own learning. Developing resilience so that they can work independently, taking risks, and reflecting on their areas of strength and development. In order to ensure the consistency of high-quality teaching and learning, we have established a staff training and development programme that is centred on the latest pedagogical research to ensure the engagement and development of our students. Teaching – planning, classroom delivery, and marking and feedback – is subject to regular and rigorous quality assurance that is linked closely to performance management, involving in-depth personal and professional self-reflection.

Effective teaching and learning:

- Enables students to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills;
- Fosters self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves;
- Involves well planned learned sequences and lessons utilising effective teaching methods, activities and management of time;
- Shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainment of students; ensuring that these are considered when planning learning;
- Demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;
- Utilises effective classroom resources of good quality, quantity and range;
- Implements effective assessment strategies to inform teaching and impact on student progress;
- Develops meta-cognitive strategies;
- Utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging students to act

responsibly;

- Supports the promotion of Catholic values;
- Supports the promotion of British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; and
- Promotes diversity and equality.

Rationale – Impact:

The impact of quality teaching and learning is ultimately tested through the progress that students make and the outcomes they achieve.

Responsibility:

All staff are responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented and acted on with teachers providing high quality teaching experiences for our students on a daily basis. Heads of faculties and departments should monitor the quality of the teaching and learning within their department and to offer support where and when appropriate. The teaching and learning team, overseen by the Head of Teaching and Learning, alongside the Senior Leadership Team, will monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school and identify where support and development is required.

Expectations:

All teaching staff are expected to work to the Teachers' Standards, effective from September 2012, relevant to their status in the school.

All teaching staff should strive to ensure their daily teaching is of a high standard and supports the pedagogical principles:

| Principle | How this should look in lesson |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Big picture learning | Ensure all students understand the aim of the lesson and how it fits into the wider curriculum. Be explicit with the learning objectives and success criteria and ensure all students in the class are working towards the same objective. |
| Retrieval practice | Ensure there are opportunities for students to reflect on prior learning and consolidate knowledge. |
| Teacher explanation | Ensure all students are fully aware of what the teacher is expecting. Break down the instructions for each task and check with the students that they understand. |
| Systematic adaptive teaching | Ensure you adapt learning to the needs of the class. Use a range of tools to monitor the depth of knowledge obtained and if there are misconceptions ensure you change the structure of the lesson to accommodate all learners. |
| Modelling | Ensure all students understand the expectation of the standard of work by providing examples of good practice. |
| Effective questioning | Use higher order thinking questions to allow all students to be stretched and challenged. Allow this questioning to identify any misconceptions and as a result use this to reshape the lesson if necessary. |
| Explicit teaching of vocabulary | Ensure there are opportunities within the lesson for students to enhance their literacy, use subject specific vocabulary. Take opportunities to break down |

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| | key terms and look at the meaning of key terms. |
| Feedback | Ensure that all verbal feedback is clear and concise, and students understand the steps they need to take in order to improve. Any written feedback should follow the school policy and allow the students act on the feedback to make further progress. The consolidate phase of the lesson should be used to check the progress that has been made in the lesson. |
| Independent learners | Ensure students have been given the opportunity within lesson to adopt effective learning tools so that they can independently apply these strategies in lesson but also for home learning. Ensure lessons are inclusive for all. |

Creating a Positive Classroom Environment:

One of the key components to an outstanding teaching is the classroom environment. The relationship between the teacher and the student is essential if effective learning is to take place. The teacher should ensure that:

- students are welcomed into the classroom by the teacher – a strong staff presence at the door to the classroom can help with this;
- classrooms are pleasant spaces to be in with inspiring and interesting displays of information and students' work;
- there is a secure learning environment that allows students the opportunity to learn, to not fear failure but to use this as a tool for future development;
- there is a purposeful environment, and students are readily engaged in the learning process;
- commitment to learning, effort and progress are all positively rewarded;
- relationships between the teacher and learner are positive and mutually respectful;
- the Behaviour for Learning policy is followed to help develop a positive learning environment.

Seating plans should be available via the planning for each class. Staff should consider seating plans carefully to ensure the most productive learning experience for each student. Student cohorts should be identified on staff used seating plans.

Planning:

Departments are responsible for creating **curriculum maps** for each year group that map out students' learning journeys for each year, ensuring the required skills and knowledge are fully covered - as required by the National Curriculum and exam board specifications. This should be overseen and monitored by the Heads of Department/Faculties.

Individual lesson planning is expected to follow the **MSJ lesson sequence**. The seven stages of the lesson should be: Do Now – Retrieval, Big Picture, Essential Knowledge, New Learning, checks for understanding, Guided/Independent Practice and Reflect

All lessons should be stored within departmentally shared **planners**. This enables the sharing of good practice across departments.

Each daily lesson should have clear **learning objectives**: these should be challenging, relevant and set at the appropriate level for student progression. The learning objectives are shared and discussed with the students and recorded to show progression.

Each daily lesson should also contain clear **success criteria**; these should also be shared with the students and should be linked to the learning objectives. The learning objectives SHOULD be the same for the whole class and adaptive strategies embedded to ensure all students can make progress.

Each daily lesson should be adequately **adapted** to suit the needs of each individual student within the class to ensure all students have the opportunity to make progress.

Planning should incorporate relevant **pedagogical principles** in order to ensure engagement and progression. These may include: high expectations, questioning, modelling, feedback and developing independent learners. Please see the Excellence at MSJ handbook for details.

Staff have a duty to set adequate **cover lessons** when out of school on a known absence. Instructions for the lesson should be kept simple and straight forward, but still challenging, using the school's lesson sequence. PowerPoints, instructions, seating plans and resources should be saved in departmental supply folders and left with the relevant cover supervisor, where this is known. Copies should also be left with the Head of Department/Faculty or with the line manager.

Teaching Within the Classroom

All teaching staff are expected to work to the Teachers' Standards, effective from September 2012, relevant to their status in the school.

All teaching staff should strive to ensure their daily teaching is of a high standard and follows the pedagogical principles outlined above.

Classroom Procedures:

Staff should be punctual to all lessons, greeting students at the door and setting a positive tone for the lesson. Students must sit where requested by the member of staff – in accordance with the class seating plan. Staff should have the highest expectations of students throughout the lesson, in both effort and behaviour. Eating and drinking in class is not acceptable, except for bottles of water. Unless there are medical reasons for doing so (sanctioned by a note from the school office), students should not need to go to the toilet during a lesson. A Toilet Pass should be given if it proves necessary. Any student needing to leave the classroom, e.g. to go to the library, should be given a pass by the teacher. Students may be sent back to the classroom if they do not have a pass. There should be an orderly end to each lesson with pupils standing behind their desks until dismissed – not congregating by the classroom door. Students should not be released before the end of lesson bell; early dismissal impacts on other classes around school. Staff should check that uniform is neat and tidy before exiting students from lessons. Top buttons must be fastened, ties properly worn, shirts tucked in and blazers worn. Students should be encouraged to take pride in their appearance in their school uniform. Should poor behaviour interrupt learning at any point in the lesson, the Behaviour Policy must be followed. Staff should implement and follow the Cultural Principles.

Assessment:

Data attained from KS2 will be used to inform a target grade for each student. This target grade, generated centrally by the school, will be used to track students' progress. Information attained from CATs will be used to identify barriers and strengths within a pupil's learning.

An assessment of current attainment will be made on each student by the class teacher each term. This assessment will be recorded through ARBOR and the whole school reporting system. This data will be provided for:

- Departments to analyse the performance of students within their department.
- Heads of Year to monitor the progression of students across the range of subjects. High achievers and underachievers need to be identified, and the appropriate reward/intervention implemented.
- Heads of Year to monitor the progression of Higher Ability students
- SENDCo to monitor the progression of SEND students.
- Deputy Head to monitor the progression of looked after children.

The classroom teacher will be responsible for assessing students' progression towards the essential knowledge highlighted in the topic overviews for each department: this will be monitored by the Head of Department/Faculty. A variety of methods should be used in order to gain an understanding of how much a student has learnt, discussion, formal tests and key pieces, written work, group work, peer and student self-assessment.

Assessments that are scheduled to be marked – in the form of **key pieces** - should be identified within the curriculum maps and should be in line with the departmental marking policy. The assessments should be directly linked to the essential knowledge on the topic overviews and linked to the 'I can' statements.

The standardisation of marking of key pieces is the responsibility of the Head of Department/Faculty: they should ensure that assessments across the department are moderated and that they accurately assess the current working grade of the student. Where appropriate, students should be involved in the assessment process. Teachers should share assessment criteria and engage students in the whole assessment cycle process.

It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to provide appropriate, personalised interventions for underachieving students.

Marking and Feedback:

The purpose of marking students' work is to:

- Look at the depth of knowledge obtained by the student
- Monitor any misconceptions
- Identify the steps they need to take to progress in their learning
- Ensure effective dialogue between teacher and pupil
- Facilitate self-esteem, greater resilience and to motivate students
- Ensure high standards of presentation, accuracy and quality of students' work

It is the teacher's responsibility to ensure that students' classwork is marked accurately. The marking of classwork should focus on the **marking of key pieces** that have been identified in departmental curriculum maps. Due to the diverse nature of the different curriculums each department has developed has bespoke frequencies of marking (as highlighted in the table below) however to ensure a consistency of approach the guidelines for all departments are set out below.

It is not required that all work needs to be marked for attainment. Pre-identified key pieces of work will assess the depth of knowledge obtained and progress against the 'I can' statements at KS3 and KS4.

Written comments in the students' books and verbal comments should be constructive, indicating to the pupils what they did successfully and how to improve. One word written comments should not be used. Written feedback should include:

- a positive comment(s) linked to the skills or knowledge that were being assessed (PC);
- a clear target for progression linked to success criteria/ exam marking criteria (T);
- a question or comment to provoke dialogue and pupil reflection/ response (Q).

During lessons students should be given time to reflect on the comments and respond accordingly.

Formative assessment is crucial to ensuring that students can make significant progress, and this will be highlighted in lessons in many different forms such as whole class feedback, quizzing and questioning etc. Student self and peer assessment must be used as an integral part of the assessment cycle; this should be evident in students' work.

Work of exceptional quality should be rewarded in some way e.g. Premium Banking Points, positive phone call home, classroom praise with the work shared with the rest of the class, work displayed, certificates, star of the week etc.

| Subject | Guidelines for marking within the department |
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| Maths | KS3 and KS4 one key piece per half term. |
| English | KS3 three summative assessments per term – Writing, Reading and speaking and listening KS4 a key piece every half term. |
| Science | KS3 and KS4 one key piece per half term. |
| RE | KS3 one key piece per half term. KS4 two key pieces per half term |
| History | KS3 and KS4 one key piece per half term. |
| Geography | KS3 two assessments (one peer marked and one teacher marked). KS4 two key piece per half term / GCSE topic. |
| MFL | KS3 one key piece per half term. KS4 a key piece every 3 weeks. |
| CAT | KS3 two key pieces per half term. KS4 marking of components and in exam components once per half term. |
| PE | 5 key points of marking per component and in exam components once per half term. |
| Creative Arts | KS3 one key piece per term. KS4 marking of components and in exam components once per half term. |
| Vocational | 5 key points of marking per component and in exam components once per half term. |

At KS4 there will also be 2 points in the year for mock exams and these will be marked, and the students act on the feedback.

Home Learning:

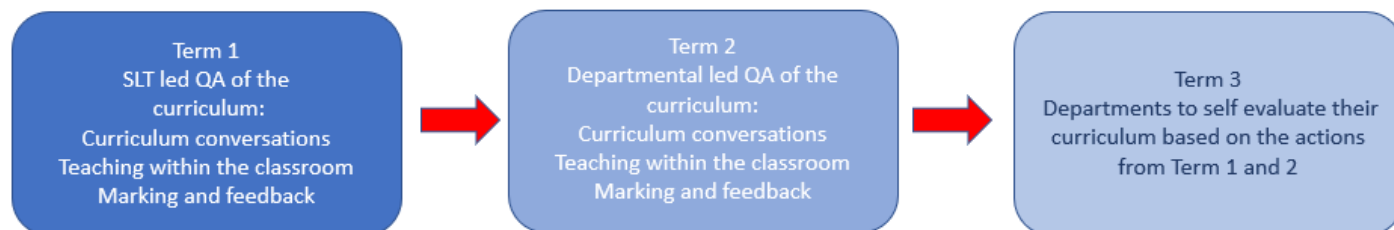
Each department generate a knowledge expert sheet for each topic. Students then highlight their understanding through revision and self-testing in their knowledge expert books and or Carousel. To check the depth of knowledge retrieval practice will be used in class to see what has been learnt and if there are still any misconceptions then the teacher will address these in class.

The knowledge expert sheets are readily available through packs each half term, so the students have easy access to the core knowledge that they need to know for each topic. This will build student resilience and will support our whole school pedagogical principle of independent practice and will allow our students to become lifelong learners.

Quality Assurance

The quality assurance processes within school are vital to the continued growth and development of both teachers and learners alike and, as such, are subject to constant review and scrutiny to ensure appropriate rigor and accuracy. The three principal areas of teaching will continue to be quality assured: planning, teaching within the classroom, and marking and feedback – student progress over time. Every instance of quality assurance will also be an opportunity for self-reflection by the member of staff being reviewed. Quality Assurance will be completed more holistically where possible: looking at the three different areas of teaching as one whole and seeing how those three principles feed into the wider curriculum. Therefore, the whole department will be involved in conversations about their existing curriculum and what steps they would like to take to further enhance the provision.

Quality assurance will take place throughout the year through positive Culture Walks and 2 formal review points 'Focus weeks' for the whole department. These sessions will take place in term 1 and term 2. In term 3, staff and the wider department will be required to evaluate their teaching and learning and to assess how they will develop themselves and make progress. This will then form part of a key discussion during their **performance management reviews**.



Those departments that require further support following the GCSE outcomes will be given bespoke intervention from the Quality of Education team.

Curriculum conversations:

Curriculum conversations will take place throughout term 1 and 2 to ensure that the curriculum is broad and balanced and has high expectations for all students. In the first instance there will be a curriculum conversation between the HOD and the Quality of Education Team. This will allow the HOD to explain the context of the curriculum and highlight strengths and areas that still need to be developed. The learning walks that will follow will be directed by the HOD and create an opportunity for the department to showcase their curriculum and the standard of teaching and learning within the department. The curriculum conversations will be shared with the department in advance so this will be an opportunity to share their best practice. Following the conversation, student panel, work scrutiny and Positive Culture Walk review each HOD will be provided with clear action points to work on into the following term.

Positive Culture Walks:

Drop ins are a vital part of assessing teaching and learning across the school. In addition, they are incredibly important for the purposes of sharing good practice. As such, we have an 'open door policy' for popping into lessons.

Positive Culture walks will take place across the year to check on the standard of teaching and learning. Feedback will be collated following the drop in that will be led by the HOD, the lead practitioners and AHOD. These will inform QA and collate typicality of that teacher over time. Feedback will be given to staff during the review meeting at the end of the term or sooner if there is an issue that needs to be raised.

The teaching and learning team will also QA the HOD and do drop ins with the HOD to ensure quality and accuracy.

Lesson Observations:

All new members of staff, ECTs and staff requiring support will be formally observed. Staff will need to provide a formal lesson plan, copy of their PowerPoint, resources, class data and seating plan for any formal observation. Observations will always be completed by two members of staff with verbal feedback provided the next day and written feedback provided after this. Staff will receive two full days' notice for their observations with ECTs receiving a longer notice period. Students' books need to be available during the lesson so observers can look at these.

Lesson observations will be graded according to the teaching standards: with inadequate; emerging, developed and embedded gradings awarded.

Work Scrutiny:

To ensure greater accuracy, work scrutiny needs to be completed within departments so that staff can demonstrate best practice, answer questions and explain their marking (where necessary). It is important to do this as an entire department so that staff have the opportunity to see other examples of marking – dedicated departmental meetings will ensure that staff are developing a dialogue about marking and HODs can evaluate how well the marking policy is being embedded. Members of the T&L team or SLT line managers would support in this QA check.

HODs will still be required to evaluate teaching and learning across their departments and to formulate an action plan for future development and growth. Information from these evaluations will be used to assist in planning aspects of staff training and development in the next academic year. Staff who require support with any aspect of their teaching and learning will experience additional checks in line with their support plan.

Staff Support:

Staff who are graded as 'emerging' in any aspect of their quality assurance will be placed on a departmental support plan. Heads of Department will produce an action and departmental support plan outlining support that will be put in place and targets to assist in the development of the member of staff. A departmental mentor (usually a line manager) will meet weekly to review progress.

Staff who are consistently graded as 'emerging' for an aspect of their teaching will be placed on a teaching and learning support plan. A support plan will be put in place involving a teaching and learning mentor and a departmental mentor. Staff will meet weekly with the Head of Teaching and Learning to assess progress towards any targets and to assess what additional support can be put in place.

CPD:

At the end of every academic year, the teaching and learning provision within school is reviewed and evaluated. Staff voice is utilised – as part of the reflective process in term 3 – to inform planning for this new academic year and the professional development opportunities that were offered. The key focus to ensure teaching is inspiring, engaging and challenging in order to promote greater pupil engagement, independence and progression – is still the principle focus of the teaching and learning team.

Monday after school sessions are dedicated to staff development. Sessions are divided, across the year, into staff training and development sessions, departmental time, leadership training time, and whole staff training. All teaching staff and cover supervisors are expected to attend.

Instructional Coaching

Instructional coaching is used by all teaching staff in the school. This style of coaching is used all year in order to develop and support teaching and learning. The coaching sessions are closely linked to the pedagogical and cultural principles and staff have all been provided the action steps which are the prescriptive steps to excellent teaching and learning that have been underpinned by the latest research in teaching and learning.

Staff within the school have taken on one of the two roles: Coach or coachee and through a 10 point review period the coaches will observe teaching and learning and give specific feedback for the coachee to improve. Instructional coaching does will not be part of the QA process but will give staff

feedback in order to improve and drive consistency with all staff working g towards the pedagogical and cultural principles.

Performance Management:

Please refer to the separate Appraisal Policy for further information on performance management.

