

## 067 Teaching and Learning

**Responsibility:** GH  
**Date:** September 2017  
**Next Review:** September 2019

### 1. Introduction

The goals of Holmfirth High School for teaching and learning are high quality and high equity. HHS has high expectations of every child and actively seeks to ensure that quality first teaching is delivered based on a sound knowledge and understanding of each student's needs. *Equity* is giving every student what they need to be successful.

The school has a professional ethos that accepts every child brings to the classroom a different knowledge base and skill set, as well as varying aptitudes and aspirations. As a result, there is a determination for every young person's needs to be assessed and his or her talents to be developed through diverse, high impact teaching and learning strategies.

### 2. Aims

All teachers (and support staff as appropriate) will seek to ensure that all children, irrespective of their background and needs, are given the opportunity to learn as well as they can, to make at least good progress and be the best that they can be.

All students should be engaged and motivated in their learning so that a student 'can-do' philosophy is evident across the school in all lessons supported by a willingness on behalf of all staff to be innovative and creative in their practice.

This policy outlines the key characteristics of expected practice at HHS.

### 3. Classroom Practice at HHS – Expected 'Non-Negotiables'

#### CHALLENGE AND SUPPORT FOR ALL STUDENTS

- All teachers should be determined that students achieve highly whatever their ability and should demonstrate their subject expertise, positivity, encouragement and enthusiasm in order to foster strong, respectful relationships in (and out of) the classroom.
- When planning lessons teachers must use the prior, current and predicted data and assessment information that they have on students in order to ensure *all* students progress in their learning; there should be an explicit awareness and understanding of individual needs e.g. of PP students, SEND students and the most able students.
- Prior information on what students have covered and awareness of prior schemes of work must be utilised to ensure there is stretch and challenge, that what has been covered previously is built upon rigorously – particularly at Key Stage 3.
- All teachers must have seating plans for each of their groups providing information regarding PP/SEN/G&T, IEPs and pathway/current data – this should be accessible to anyone visiting the class undertaking an observation / learning walk.
- Whilst individual lesson plans are not required for every lesson, there should be evidence of planning for learning / progress – through the objectives/outcomes, lesson

content and progress evidenced in the lesson; lesson plans should be provided for formal observations.

- Student *learning* must be the priority leading to improvements in levels of progress.
- Whilst there is no one recipe for an outstanding lesson, ideally periods of teacher-led information should be relatively short and student-led activities should form a key part of the lesson, with frequent review sessions, to enable students to clearly demonstrate their learning e.g. this may include group discussions, presentations, demonstrations, research/problem-solving tasks.
- Teachers' high levels of expertise must ensure that tasks and activities are well-pitched and challenging in order to foster enthusiasm and excitement for learning, and the students themselves have high expectations of what they can achieve.
- Tasks / activities must be differentiated, varied and flexible to appropriately challenge students of all abilities – the needs of 'disadvantaged' students must be carefully considered to ensure they make progress at least in line with their 'non-disadvantaged' peers, and work should be adapted where necessary to challenge the most able students.
- Questioning should be incisive and include higher order questions that encourage students to think hard and with breadth and depth.
- Creative and innovative ideas and activities are actively encouraged in a 'sky's the limit' culture of T & L; teachers are strongly encouraged to take risks and experiment with a range of T & L strategies and methodologies, including the use of new and emerging technologies.
- Every opportunity should be exploited to help students think about their learning more explicitly (metacognition / 'learning to learn' approaches). This should include collaborative learning where students support each other and make their thinking explicit through discussion and having a repertoire of strategies to choose from during learning activities.
- The Assessment, Marking and Target-setting policies must be consistently implemented so that all students know their strengths, weaknesses, their targets, and how to improve their learning and outcomes through high quality, incisive formative, as well as summative, assessment. Students must have opportunities to act upon feedback to improve their work.
- There must be high, explicit expectations regarding the presentation and quality of work students produce – clear, legible handwriting, dates, titles, underlining etc which reflects that all students take pride in their work.
- Recording progress should be accurate and reflect progression across the key stages; where progress is not being made, early intervention should be implemented to ensure that no student falls behind.
- There should be opportunities within schemes of work for students to develop and apply their literacy (including SPAG – spelling, punctuation and grammar) and numeracy skills.
- Behaviour systems and procedures, departmental and whole-school, should also be rigorously and consistently implemented, and incidents followed up and recorded.
- The Homework Policy must also be implemented; homework should be engaging and meaningful at all times to support and extend learning.
- All teachers should reflect upon, and seek to develop, their own classroom practice in a supportive, reflective culture of self-improvement.

#### 4. **Monitoring and Evaluation**

It is a key aspect of the Head of Department's leadership and management role to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning within their curriculum area. This will be undertaken predominantly via:

- **Lesson observations**
- **Learning walks / 'drop-ins'**
- **Work scrutiny**
- **Lesson plan scrutiny**
- **Sims / SISRA data tracking**
- **Student and staff voice / surveys**
- **Regular meetings with individual teachers to review and discuss student progress**
- **Appraisal**

SLT line managers will support HODs in the monitoring and review of teaching, learning and assessment in the curriculum area.

Heads of Department should ensure appropriate meeting time is allocated to opportunities for teachers to:

- **Talk about teaching and learning**
- **Observe each other teach**
- **Plan, organise, mark/moderate and evaluate together**
- **Learn from each other, share and develop outstanding ideas and practice**

These form the characteristics of schools who deliver outstanding teaching and learning.

It is also the responsibility of the HOD in the first instance to identify and work with teachers who may require extra support or training, without which there is a danger of underperformance in the classroom. Where underperformance is evidenced, SLT should be involved.

SLT will proactively support and encourage internal observations within, and across subjects, and external visits to other schools / colleges.

The T & L working group provides further opportunity for staff to share and develop leading-edge practice.

#### 5. **Collaborative Peer Coaching and Mentoring**

HHS believes that coaching can positively impact upon wider school improvement through the creation of a coaching culture. Coaching can increase internal capacity through its power to engage in, and sustain, continuous learning.

Teacher coaches have been identified, alongside areas of expertise. The coaches then work with other teachers/peers to support professional development in certain areas.

Coaching builds capacity for improvement in this way, and by: creating dialogue, sharing learning and changing ways of learning.

The list of coaches, mentors and areas of expertise is reviewed annually.

**Relevant Policies** – *must be understood and adhered to by all staff*

- **Behaviour**
- **Safeguarding**
- **Assessment, Marking and Feedback, including Target-Setting**

