

# Teaching and Learning Policy

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*“The principle goal of education is to create men and women who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what other generations have done.”* Jean Piaget

## **Rationale**

Our core business is learning and improving the quality of teaching and learning is fundamental to raising achievement at King Arthur’s. This policy will help to ensure that the school delivers its aims and vision for learning.

## **Aims**

1. To empower teachers at King Arthur’s with a model for lesson design planning in order to maximise learning
2. To provide common criteria against which high quality teaching and learning can be evaluated
3. To ensure a high quality of experience for all students to help maximise each individual’s potential, whilst supporting creativity and individuality
4. To maximise every students’ potential
5. Every student – some progress with their learning every lesson

## **What does quality teaching look like? Quality Teaching:**

- provides carefully structured activities matched to student needs
- gives students some responsibility for their own work
- develops well planned, prepared and paced lessons that maintain high levels of interaction with the class
- provides challenging work stemming from expert subject knowledge, how to teach it and how students learn
- maintains high levels of student engagement
- creates a positive atmosphere in the classroom through excellent relationships
- pace, variety, challenge, expectations
- incorporates high levels of praise and enthusiasm
- uses a variety of approaches; strategies and techniques are well selected and time is used productively
- uses homework effectively; particularly to reinforce and extend what is learned in school, if not prepare for a new topic
- modelling good outcomes
- resources ICT

## **What does quality learning look like? Quality Learning is:**

- when students are motivated and enthused by what they are learning
- an active process – a product of doing rather than receiving
- builds on prior knowledge
- supported by both the teacher and other students, and takes the form of interaction, collaboration and teacher intervention
- centred on the learners’ responsibility for their own learning. They are able to exercise choice, develop goals, plan their approach and work independently.
- reflective and enables learners to monitor and review the learning

- where students make progress with their learning
- when students display a strong desire to contribute the effort and concentration required to match the teachers passion for learning

## GOOD AND OUTSTAND LESSONS

### **Guidance for Lesson Planning**

All lessons should be planned and resourced with consideration to the age, ability and needs of the student. An effective lesson is structured to include a starter activity, the main body of the lesson and a plenary. In addition, well-planned lessons contain the following elements:

#### **1. Learning Objectives are which are identified and shared**

This needs to be a two step approach in which students are told not only the purpose of the lesson but also what the teacher expects in terms of outcomes from activity. There is a need to communicate why they are doing what they are doing and how it fits into the bigger picture of the subject or their wider learning across the curriculum.

#### **This might be achieved through:**

- the learning objectives being outlined to the students at or near to the beginning of each lesson.
- the students being clear about the learning objectives in terms of what they are expected to learn. Objectives could be phrased in terms of:

#### **'We are learning to ...:**

- a. **know that ...** (knowledge - factual information such as names of people or equipment, places, symbols, formulae etc.);
  - b. **understand how/why ...** (understanding – concepts, reasons, effects, principles, processes etc.);
  - c. **develop/be able to ...** (skills – using knowledge, applying techniques, analysing information etc.);
  - d. **develop/be aware of ...** (attitudes and values – empathy, caring, sensitivity towards social issues, feelings, moral issues etc.);
  - e. **explore and refine strategies for ...** (creating, designing, hypothesising, exploring alternatives).
- The students understand desired learning outcomes. You want to tell students what you expect from them as a high quality outcome of each lesson or part lesson and how they will be assessed on the work they are to do, create or produce? This will usually be done through effective modelling of tasks and describing or showing different possible attainment levels students will produce. Outcomes could to be phrased in terms of:

#### **'What I am looking For ...: ('WILF')**

- a. from everyone is.....'
- b. you to be successful is...'
- c. for top marks is.....'

#### **2. Review learning from a previous lesson to link and consolidate**

Review helps create links with previous learning. This helps build secure foundations for subsequent learning, so that learners can progressively develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, attitudes and values contained in the curriculum.

### **3. Variety of Learning Activity**

The main activity/activities in a lesson are critical in making learning an enjoyable and challenging experience. It should stimulate learning through matching teaching techniques and strategies to the range of learning styles and needs within your class. Effective lessons will contain activities for visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learners.

Ultimately, lesson preparation should involve using student data and assessments to design different tasks to meet individual student learning styles. It should provide opportunities for students to show and develop their skills and abilities to work independently and collaboratively.

When you decide how many tasks to cover in a lesson, and how long each should be, as a guide try not to exceed the concentration span of students. Tony Buzan suggests that the average concentration span corresponds roughly to chronological age plus one or two minutes. With challenging classes take this figure as a maximum – so, for example, keep tasks under 12 minutes for Year 7 students.

### **4. Differentiation to Enable All Learners to Succeed**

Differentiation can be seen as an on-going process that is accommodating the needs of individual students in King Arthur's. It ensures that teaching allows most learners to make at least their expected progress in relation to their capability. It will also stretch the less able to work as close to their capability as possible and the gifted and talented way beyond. Differentiation is best achieved when based upon an informed review of the student's learning and therefore through a diagnostic and formative assessment procedure. (See Appendix 1)

Differentiation within classes should therefore take account of students' current and target grades. Other professional judgements through diagnostic and formative assessment may reshape initial strategies over time, but this data should remain central to the differentiation employed in the classroom.

### **5. Assessment for Learning**

The key focus of assessment in teaching and learning is to enable students to be continually aware of where they are now in their learning, where they can or need to get to, and, most importantly, how best to get there.

Assessment is of prime importance to staff to inform their future planning and activity with classes. We must recognise equally that it has a profound influence on student motivation and self-esteem. Therefore it must show consideration and be both constructive and sensitive. Our ability to share this information with parents effectively is key to students being supported as well as possible at home.

### **Evaluation**

This Teaching and Learning Policy will be achieved and supported by:

- A firm commitment to improving the quality of teaching and learning of students
- The development and improvement of learning and teaching as the central component in school improvement planning
- The use of continuing professional development (courses, coaching, inset, mentoring, training and so on) within the cycle and framework of performance management and staff development days.

- The formal and informal monitoring systems which are already in place, augmented by lesson observations, peer observations, work sampling, student voice and analysis of assessment and examination data

## **June 2008**

Appendices:

- I Improving the quality of teaching and learning through differentiation
- II Recommended Professional reading

## **Appendix 1**

### **Improving the quality of teaching and learning through differentiation**

Differentiation is the process of meeting the needs of different types of learners in our classrooms. This might be achieved by:

#### **a. TASK**

Because students work in a variety of ways with their different strength and aptitudes, a range of tasks spanning the spectrum of abilities can be an effective way of differentiating.

#### **b. RESOURCE**

Resources are available to challenge the more able and support students with special educational needs. It means changing the resources by which students learn to meet their individual needs. Practical strategies could include:

- Layout, design, graphics and readability of the resource.
- Training the pupils to use a variety of resources independently (including a study skills programme such as SamLearning)
- Reducing the dependence on whole class texts as a source for teaching.
- Variety of mediums for example marker pens and poster paper

#### **c. RESPONSE**

The response of the teacher / adult / fellow student is a form by which differentiation can be achieved. This is essential in cases where differentiation by outcome is planned as the teacher's written or spoken response will vary from student to student. Marking of a student's work is an important medium for differentiation by response.

#### **d. OUTCOME**

Students working on a common un-differentiated task will inevitably produce different outcomes to the task set, as long as the task is not too closed.

#### **e. GROUP**

Differentiation by group is an important way to allow purposeful use of resources. Students could belong to smaller groups within a larger teaching group. The students will have a record of the groups to which they belong.

#### **f. SUPPORT**

The different needs of the different students will inevitably mean that some students need greater support than others. There are a number of strategies that can provide that support. Using the skills of LSAs in the classroom to create a positive learning environment for example.

These strategies adapt teaching to the potential and needs of each individual, from the gifted and talented to those with special educational needs, and as a result create a culture of respect for others and their learning, whatever their gender, social background or ethnic group.