

Saint John Houghton Catholic Voluntary Academy **Teaching and Learning Policy**

Approved: November 2016
Date for Next Review: November 2018

1. Vision and Mission:

“To establish a whole curriculum which will balance the highest academic standards with the life skills and critical awareness necessary to enable all students to reach their full potential and to respond to the needs of society.”

As a Catholic Voluntary Academy everything we do is based around our Mission Statement and we expect all who work with us to actively promote our values.

All members of the community are learners and we are on a journey together which respects the dignity and education of the **whole** person. It is important then to recognise that open-mindedness, and a spirit of enquiry are central to good learning, along with respect and reverence, self-esteem, self awareness, understanding and discernment. It is important to ensure a safe and secure environment for a variety of learning experiences for both students and staff.

To this end:

Students of all abilities at Saint John Houghton Catholic Academy will be given equal opportunities to learn in order to achieve their full potential. Teaching methods will be used effectively and appropriately to accommodate students’ needs. It is the responsibility of all staff and students to evaluate their own performance. By knowing and understanding how staff and students are performing, staff at all levels can share strengths and identify potential for improvement.

2. Aims:

1. To provide a safe, stimulating learning environment for all students and teachers;
2. To enable students to achieve their full potential by learning in a variety of ways and through challenging learning experiences;
3. To set high expectations for all students in order to raise their aspirations
4. To share and understand a common meaning of “high quality learning and teaching”.
5. To raise standards of both learning and teaching across all departments.
6. To support and facilitate improvements in learning and teaching through appropriate JPD activities.
7. To monitor the quality of learning and teaching using an effective Quality Assurance process.

3. Teaching and Learning with Students:

We believe that young people learn best when they:

1. are happy;
2. are interested and motivated;
3. achieve success and gain approval;
4. are given tasks which match and extend their ability;
5. clearly understand the task;
6. are confident, feel secure and are aware of boundaries;
7. are challenged and stimulated.

4. The Learning Experience

a) This should be organised to ensure that students have the opportunity to:

1. work individually, in groups and as a class;
2. make decisions;
3. work co-operatively;
4. solve problems;
5. be creative;
6. discuss their ideas;
7. develop social skills;
8. develop independence;
9. use initiative;
10. receive support;
11. achieve academically.

b) Students should be encouraged to develop **organisational skills and independence** through:

1. appropriate tasks;
2. confidence building;
3. example;
4. co-operation;
5. provision of suitable opportunities;
6. responsibilities.

5. The Learning Environment

Learning takes place in an environment which:

1. is challenging and stimulating;
2. is peaceful and calm;
3. is happy and caring;
4. is organised;
5. is well resourced;
6. makes learning accessible;
7. is encouraging and appreciative;

8. is welcoming;
9. provides equal opportunities;

6. Learning:

Students should take responsibility for their own learning by:

1. being prepared for lessons with the correct equipment;
2. completing homework to enhance their learning;
3. taking pride in their work through consistent high expectations across the curriculum for neat and accurate presentation of their work;
4. making positive contributions to class discussions;
5. following the expected standards of behaviour and attitude to learning
6. Regularly using opportunities to reflect on their own learning through teacher feedback, self and peer assessment. Students should be encouraged to set targets to improve their learning after feedback

Teachers and other adults are encouraged to continue in their journey of learning by:

1. Reflecting on their own practice
2. Working in collaboration with peers and sharing good practice
3. Keeping up to date with subject knowledge and current pedagogy
4. Listening to their students.

7. Learning Support:

Teachers, Teaching assistants and other adults should:

1. be aware of the specific learning needs of all students consulting with the SENCO about the needs of individual students when appropriate;
2. work with each other to ensure students are best supported in their learning; and
3. use all relevant data as working documents in their planning to differentiate work for individual students.

8. Teaching:

a) Planning and Preparation Teachers should plan lessons:

1. which allow students to progress in their learning;
2. where the learning that is required to take place in each part of the lesson is clear and checkable;
3. which use plenaries and stock taking to summarise learning, and help students to understand how to make progress and improve;
4. which allow students to develop and practice higher order thinking skills such as creativity, analysis, problem solving, decision making and application; which are differentiated for varying needs by task, resources, outcomes and/or method
5. which use stimulating resources, which are differentiated as appropriate to the students;
6. which provide pace and challenge for all students;
7. which use effective questioning and AFL techniques to direct and challenge students;
8. which meet external requirements;

9. which are informed, when appropriate, by prior learning and
10. which are enjoyable and interesting
11. which incorporate seating plans which enable students to learn at their best.

b) Teaching styles

Teachers should use teaching strategies which:

1. allow students to learn in different methods
2. allow students to work both independently and collaboratively, and which contribute to one another's learning
3. Use positive behaviour management and encouragement for students to achieve, including praise and rewards according to academy policy;
4. use topics which are relevant and within students' experience;
5. use others to deliver the lessons (e.g. other students, support staff, outside agencies).

c) Assessment, Marking and Feedback

Teachers should:

1. mark and assess students' work regularly according to the academy assessment policy;
2. use analysis of assessments to inform their teaching and support students' progress;
3. use data to ensure students are working at their full potential and set targets to achieve this including Raising Attainment Plans for targeted students
4. inform parent, students and appropriate staff within school of students' progress or underachievement.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation of Quality of Teaching and Learning:

a) Classroom Teachers

Classroom teachers are responsible for the progress and attainment of students in their classes and for self-evaluating their own professional development. This is achieved by:

1. self-evaluation of their subject knowledge and understanding of educational initiatives;
2. self-evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of their own teaching and their classroom management;
3. monitoring student progress to ensure they achieve well against prior achievement and similar groups nationally;
4. self-evaluation of their contribution to the policies and aspirations of the school.

b) Form Tutors

Form tutors are responsible for contributing to, and monitoring the progress and well being of, individual students in their tutor group and for providing support and advice to those students, both socially and academically.

This is achieved by:

1. Encouraging and developing the ability of students to evaluate and take responsibility for their own learning;
2. Monitoring behaviour, homework, use of planners, rewards and sanctions, uniform and attendance.

c) Curriculum Leaders

Curriculum leaders are responsible for the effective teaching of their subjects, evaluating the quality of teaching and standards of students' achievements and setting targets for improvement.

This is achieved by:

1. evaluating the teaching of their subject, and the planning of lessons and using this analysis to identify and share effective practice and to lead action for improvement;
2. ensuring curriculum coverage, continuity and progress for all students;
3. establishing and implementing clear policies and practices for assessing, recording and reporting on student progress and setting targets for further improvement in line with whole school policies;
4. analysing and interpreting data on students' performance against school expectations and other comparative data; setting expectations and targets and implementing actions for the achievement of individual students and key groups (e.g. able students, gender groups, pupil premium C/D students);
5. monitoring students' work through work scrutiny: regular sampling of homework, classwork, students' responses and attitudes in order to make a comparative evaluation of students' work against other classes and year groups to ensure quality, consistency and to implement strategies for improvement;
6. formal and informal observations of teachers in their subject area resulting in constructive feedback. Observe teachers as part of the school Appraisal system; and
7. evaluating progress of teaching and learning targets in departmental development plans, in line with School Improvement Plan.
8. To ensure that learning and teaching developments are included in departmental meeting agendas and department JPD activities

d) Progress Leaders

Progress Leaders are responsible for the progress and monitoring of the overall experience of groups and individuals in their year groups.

1. monitoring the progress and potential of the year group, and using student data to identify and set targets for specific students according to their needs, e.g. effort levels etc
2. maintaining an overview of the experience of students in their year group by e.g. monitoring the number of detentions, use of the SIR, cross-curricular activities;
3. monitoring attitudes to learning through e.g. attendance and behaviour;

4. liaise with parents concerning progress and learning during the year when required;
5. reporting back to the Academy Leadership Team and to staff as requested.

e) Assistant Headteacher: Teaching and Learning

The Assistant Headteacher is responsible for implementing the Teaching and Learning policy and ensuring that the systems within the school are monitored effectively.

This is achieved by:

1. developing a whole school system of Quality Assurance which enables the School Governors and Head teacher to have an overview of standards relating to learning and teaching
2. providing leadership in the development and evaluation of Teaching & Learning across the school through Inset and JPD sessions
3. maintaining and periodically reviewing the Teaching and Learning policy
4. Leading and managing the learning and teaching review process for curriculum areas (which involves monitoring the learning and teaching quality of all teachers).
Monitoring the performance of middle managers and ensure accountability. Observe lessons on a regular basis and give feedback to enable staff to improve performance in line with the School's Improvement Plan.
5. Arrange Learning walk weeks with identified focusses linked to SIP eg More Able, use of group work
6. providing feedback to individuals and departments on the results of the QA cycle which focusses on strengths and areas for development.
7. Ensure that Department evaluation and improvement plans have Teaching and Learning targets.
8. Ensuring that learning and teaching developments are included in JPD activities and programmes.
9. Ensuring that staff are aware of current research and national initiatives related to learning and teaching.

g) Leadership Management Team

Senior Leaders should set priorities and targets for improvement at whole school level based on evidence gained from monitoring procedures. They track progress made on the School Improvement Plan. Monitoring and evaluation principally takes place through termly meetings with the Link departments, inspection of the QA department file and formal and informal classroom observations of teaching and learning.

h) The Head teacher

The Head teacher is responsible for monitoring the performance of members of the School Leadership Team, and will also conduct a number of classroom drop-ins.

i) Reviewing Procedures

Monitoring of Teaching and Learning

All Curriculum Leaders have a QA file in place that creates a complete picture of Teaching and Learning in their area.

Monitoring will be an annual cycle that the Assistant Headteacher will start in July 2015 with the first review in July 2016.

Curriculum Leader's Review Meetings: To begin in July 2016

The Head teacher, together with the LMT link, will meet each Curriculum Leader annually with the aim of:

1. monitoring the effectiveness of leadership and management of their curriculum area;
2. use the SEF and DIP to review Teaching and Learning targets for the year
3. analysing performance data in line with school and national data
4. ensuring that the SEF and DIP is updated and strengths and areas for improvement identified