



LEARNING & TEACHING POLICY

Aim

The following policy is 'aspirational'. It is what we *expect* our approach to teaching and learning to be, however, we recognise that for a *few* lessons this approach may not be appropriate.

We place a great emphasis in ensuring that we invest our resources in keeping abreast of current research and offering our teachers opportunities to continually develop their practice to the benefit of our students. We advocate the methodology of Accelerated Learning¹ (This is demonstrated in the 10 Strategies of a 'good' lesson detailed below). The policy in no way seeks to pre-scribe the minutiae of lesson delivery, but attempts to provide a 'frame-work' for learning based on extensive research.

1. Teaching and Learning to be at the forefront of everything at Warden Park

- 1.1 Every department meeting will begin with a L&T 'slot'. This need only be a few minutes in duration and may take the form of sharing good practice or reflecting on current research and its applicability to the curriculum area.
- 1.2 Every staff meeting will begin with an item related to L&T.

2. Responsibilities of Teachers

- 2.1 All members of staff share the responsibility for ensuring that high standards are maintained at all times (see Behavioural Policy).
- 2.2 High standards of behaviour, work and respect depend upon the example of us all in the classroom and around the school.
- 2.3 Good order in lessons has to be worked on. It does not simply happen, therefore, teachers must:
 - (a) set high standards
 - (b) apply rules fairly, firmly and consistently
 - (c) expect to give and to receive respect
 - (d) treat everyone as an individual
 - (e) be positive and friendly (see Behavioural Policy)
- 2.4 Good relationships between staff and students are vital, so teachers must take the initiative. At Warden Park we are fortunate in enjoying good student/staff relationships but we can never take this for granted. The Warden Park golden rule is the 4 to 1 rule, i.e. four positive 'strokes'² for every negative one.
- 2.5 During lessons students flourish in an atmosphere which is safe, supportive, calm and positive. Well prepared, stimulating lessons generate good behaviour and earn respect. Therefore, teachers must insist on high standards of behaviour, work and respect. Teachers must never criticise another member of staff or school policy when

¹ Accelerated Learning, in this context, does not refer to Students taking public examinations earlier, but to the 'system' of learning constructed to enhance the learning of *all* students.

² A 'stroke' is a 'unit' of interaction, i.e. an example of a positive 'stroke' could be as simple as a greeting



talking with students. Students' behaviour reflects the way they are treated. In their daily work teachers should:

- (a) Have very high expectations of children and convey these to them regularly. Students will 'rise or fall' to their teacher's level of expectation.
- (b) Wherever possible, arrive before the class and begin every lesson on time. Begin each lesson with a formal greeting. Students behind desks. Visual check that everyone properly attired. This takes seconds but sets the scene, i.e. the lesson is about to begin. Whatever conversations etc. that were going on have now finished.
- (c) Be prepared for every lesson.
- (d) Keep everyone engaged, challenged and interested in a variety of tasks. Try a variety of questioning strategies, problem solving, 'thinking' activities etc.
- (e) Deal with any incidents of misbehaviour - to ignore it is to condone it (see Behavioural Policy).
- (f) Set appropriate Independent Study, mark it promptly and comment constructively as per the school Assessment policy.
- (g) Keep an attractive, clean and tidy room with displays of students' work, 10 strategies poster, and motivational and instructive literature.
- (h) Ensure all activities are meaningful and have a learning outcome, i.e. no 'copying up', poster making.
- (i) Ensure that every lesson is based on the ten strategies for a good lesson (see below).

3. Support for Teachers

- 3.1 The Subject Leader and the LT will support classroom teachers in all aspects of this policy. It is NOT a weakness to have difficulties; it is a weakness to ignore them.

4. Monitoring Performance

- 4.1 Teaching will be monitored via the School Performance Management Policy, department observation and cross-curricular observation by way of the regular observation weeks.

5. Ten strategies to improve children's learning

- 5.1 **Big Picture** first. ('Rooting' the learning)
At the beginning of every³ lesson teachers should give the overview - "So, last lesson we...by the end of today's lesson we shall have learned..."

³ Very occasionally a teacher might deliberately omit this. It would be rare though.



- 5.2 **High expectations** of teachers and students
Teacher expectation shapes performance. The teacher's expectations will be passed on to the students. Teachers should have high, positive expectations of themselves and their students always.
- 5.3 Notice, or acknowledge, **every student every lesson**.
- 5.4 Ensure lessons are "**high challenge, low stress**", i.e. appropriate use of differentiation. Classrooms need to be safe havens for learning where students are free from the threat of intimidation or being put down.
- 5.5 Positively **Manage Behaviours**
Teachers should describe the behaviours they want and reinforce positively when they get them. Teachers should be specific. Praise should be given on a ratio of four positive strokes to each negative. Problem behaviour should be separated from the person. 'Catch them being good, catch them being successful and let them know it'.
- 5.6 **Optimal use of time**
Research shows that the teenage brain's optimal time on task is chronological age plus one, i.e. for 14 year olds, 15 minutes on task then some sort of review or reflection activity or 'brain gym exercise' for 2/3 minutes.
- 5.7 **Input in three ways**
Reinforce the information you provide in a **visual, auditory and kinaesthetic (i.e. active)**. This accesses the preferred learning style of everyone and makes the new information distinctive and thus more memorable.
- 5.8 **Demonstration** – allow students the opportunity to demonstrate their learning.
- 5.9 **Assessment for Learning**.
Teachers should strive to give immediate feedback. Check for understanding regularly. Students should be encouraged to share with each other. All written and spoken feedback must try to inform the student how they could improve their knowledge and performance (see Assessment Policy).
- 5.10 **Review the Learning**
Every lesson should conclude with a period of recapping the learning of the lesson against the intended learning outcomes specified at the beginning of the lesson. (The National Strategy calls this the plenary session)



THE 10 STRATEGIES FOR A GOOD LESSON

1. **Big Picture**
 - Connect with the previous learning
 - “By the end of this lesson we will...”
2. **High Expectations**
 - Teacher expectation shapes performance
 - Always have high, positive expectations
3. **Acknowledge Every Student**
 - Increasing self- esteem and being valued
4. **‘High Challenge / Low Stress’**
 - Differentiate to ensure engagement & motivation of *every* child
5. **Positive Behaviour Management**
 - Be assertive, not passive
 - Describe the behaviour you want, not what you don’t want
 - Use positive language
 - Praise on a minimum ratio of 4 to 1
6. **Optimal Use of Time**
 - Optimal time is chronological age plus 1
 - Pace
7. **Input 3 Ways – VAK**
 - Reinforce information: Visually, Auditorally & Kinaesthetically
8. **Demonstration**
 - Give students the opportunity to demonstrate their learning
9. **Assessment for Learning**
 - Ensure rich, formative feedback
 - Use a variety of strategies, i.e. feedback from teacher, self and peers
10. **Reviewing the Learning**
 - Recap
 - Look towards future learning



What makes a lesson 'outstanding'¹?

Teaching	Learning
Teacher establishes specific learning targets for the lesson. They exceed expectations, based on the abilities of all students and include an element of new learning.	The progress and degree of learning achieved by the vast majority of students exceeds expectations of them based on their abilities.
Classroom presence & management conveys <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ enjoyment ▪ enthusiasm ▪ self-confidence ▪ a 'can do' philosophy about the challenging learning to be acquired. Praise is <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ well focused ▪ frequent and ▪ sincere 	Students display <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ enthusiasm and ▪ excitement for their learning They feel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ safe ▪ valued ▪ intrinsically motivated ▪ very confident They tackle learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ without fear of difficulty or ▪ failure They seek <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ praise and ▪ reward
Teacher has an inspirational relationship with students based on a very good knowledge of each one. The teacher knows what <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ intrigues ▪ motivates ▪ excites their students to learn independently and at their best.	Students know their target and how to improve their learning. They clearly want to improve. Their efforts show <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ resilience ▪ resourcefulness ▪ responsibility
Periods of teacher led information transfer are short. They use ingenious techniques and innovative aids and resources directly facilitating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ student curiosity ▪ query ▪ engagement ▪ and desire to tackle the learning 	Students engage fully with the transfer of learning showing themselves as active participants. They ask sensitive and insightful questions and they share observations and discoveries with the teacher and peers.
Student led learning activities dominate the lesson and are <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ differentiated ▪ varied and ▪ flexible facilitating and challenging all students to discover and learn for themselves and with each other	Students eagerly and confidently engage with the learning activities. Students investigate independently discovering their own learning, thereby 'owning' their learning.
Review sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ frequent, crafted to be student led ▪ are varied ▪ offer a voice for all The final session confirms the learning of the lesson and its application elsewhere.	Students engage fully in interim and terminal re-caps and plenary. They give feedback to the teacher and peers which is comprehensive and accurate demonstrating outstanding learning.

¹Research published in 'Leader' – July 2010 (Tim Hann)

