



Saint Paul's Catholic High School

Moving forward together. Achievement for all!

TEACHING & LEARNING POLICY



Journeying together with Jesus Christ, we learn to love and love to learn.

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Rationale

The most effective teaching methods are heavily debated. At St Pauls we believe that the only way to evaluate the quality of teaching is whether it leads, over time, to successful learning and progress, and we accept that there is no single 'right' way to achieve this. We do not want our teachers to be constrained by onerous lesson planning restrictions. We want our own knowledge, research and experience to inform 'what works' in our context, and to equip our teachers with the professional confidence to continually evaluate, refine and develop their own practice free from one-off performance, but within a common learning policy that is clear, consistent in its expectations and developmental rather than restrictive. It should be simple enough to be reproduced as a one-page summary and flexible enough to apply to every learning situation.

At St Pauls, we have a Quality-First Teaching approach. Put very simply, this means that fundamental responsibility for closing students' knowledge gaps and securing Good progress for all individuals lies with the teacher in the classroom. Different students at different times may, for a variety of reasons, access additional support and/or interventions which take place on top of this, but this should never detract from or replace the quality of teaching in the classroom as we accept this is the single greatest factor in the progress any student makes. In order to ensure whole school consistency of expectations, we have St Paul's Operating Procedures for all teachers (see appendix).

Our approach is summed up by the **Assess-Plan-Teach-Repeat** cycle. This should be applied at all scales, from the minute-by-minute (e.g. the principles of formative assessment) to the term-by-term (e.g. implementing a new scheme of learning). Everything else should be of secondary importance to this. All classrooms have a Teaching and Learning pledge displayed on their doors as a formal acknowledgement of the commitment we have towards each student in each lesson (see appendix).

Aims

Through applying this policy, we aim to:

- Raise standards of teaching and learning across the school to a minimum of Good, always aspiring to be Outstanding.
- Raise students' aspirations by equipping them with the thinking and learning skills necessary for success.
- Promote a consistency of approach to learning across the school without stifling professional judgement or creativity.

ASSESS

Assessment has two purposes. One, students act on feedback in order to make progress over time. Two, it informs future planning and teaching.

1. Teachers must have a secure overview of the starting points, progress, context and learning gaps of all their students.
2. Formal assessment must reflect the rigorous demands of the KS4 specifications and the KS3 curriculum framework.
3. Marking must be primarily formative, using actions which make it clear about *what* students must do to improve and *how*.
4. Feedback must be regular, using our agreed common practices.

PLAN

Planning is a process, not an end product. It has one purpose, to enable high quality delivery which meets the needs of all students.

1. Be clear and precise about the knowledge and skills you want students to learn, not what you want them to do in lessons.
2. Learning activities, including independent study and homework tasks, must be designed to facilitate learning and not to keep students busy.
3. Schemes of work must be planned backwards from known assessment criteria in order to address the knowledge and skills necessary, and must not put a limit on students' progress.
4. All students need challenge, not just the 'most able'. It is when students struggle just outside of their comfort zone that they are most likely to learn – **Teach To The Top**, with appropriate scaffold.
5. Differentiation should be planned over time to ensure a quality first approach which meets the needs of all students, and maximises the effectiveness of any additional adults in the room.
6. Classes should have a seating plan constructed with due regard to prior attainment and individual need.
7. Refer to the shared Standard Operating Procedures to ensure consistency across the school.
8. All lessons must get off to a strong start, with students purposefully learning from the beginning and throughout. Plan proactively for behaviour.

TEACH

1. Go with the learning. The 'flow' of great progress is more important than following a lesson plan.
2. Ensure that the learning has stuck, through precise, recall and systematic checking of understanding. Adapt your teaching as a result.
3. We are all teachers of literacy and numeracy. The quality of both students' and teachers' language in instructions and questioning are significant factors on progress.
4. All students must work harder than the teacher, over time (ideally an 80% student/20% teacher split). Don't plan for students to be passive.

5. Teachers must be explicit about learning outcomes and key words – students need to know what they must learn, and how they'll be assessed.
6. Reinforce our core values, mission statement and ethos. Your classroom is a learning community and everyone's success depends on each other.

REPEAT

Quality-first teaching is never finished. The effectiveness of teaching is evaluated through assessment of the students' learning, which informs changes to your planning and begins the cycle again.

Section B: Monitoring and Evaluation of Teaching & Learning

Encouraged by the most recent Ofsted descriptors for the quality of teaching and learning, our quality assurance processes have evolved beyond individual lesson judgements in favour of a developmental model of self-reflection and quality assurance alongside a robust and holistic evaluation of the quality of teaching over time. We base this on triangulation between learning walks, the quality of students' work and their termly progress data to produce a holistic judgement rather than a series of one-off snapshots.

Responsibilities

In line with our Quality-First Teaching approach, classroom teachers are primarily responsible for evaluating the progress of students in their classes and for engaging in CPD which will improve these outcomes. This is achieved by:

- Self-evaluation of their subject knowledge and understanding of educational initiatives.
- Reflection on the quality and effectiveness of their own teaching and classroom management.
- Monitoring pupil progress to ensure they achieve well against national expectations.
- Self-evaluation of their contribution to the mission and values of the school.
- Conversations with their line managers following learning walks, book looks, student voice, data analysis and other Quality assurance activities.

Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring effective learning within their subject areas, evaluating the quality of teaching and students' progress and setting targets for improvement. This is achieved by:

- 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.
- Ensuring the curriculum enables all students to make progress at or above national expectations.
- Establishing and implementing clear policies and practices for assessing, recording and reporting on students' progress.
- Monitoring student work by regular sampling of homework, classwork and student voice to ensure quality and consistency.
- Observing teachers in formal SEF weeks and informal Learning Walks giving feedback which is constructive and developmental. This will inform both the appraisal process and teachers' personal CPD plans.

- Evaluating progress of teaching and learning targets in department development plans and evaluation frameworks, in line with the School Improvement Plan and Evaluation Framework.

Monitoring of the policy

The monitoring and periodic review of the Teaching and Learning policy shall be the responsibility of the Deputy Headteacher (Teaching & Learning).

SAINT PAUL'S OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR OUTSTANDING TEACHING AND LEARNING

1. **MAKE IT PERSONAL:** Use your knowledge of the students as well as information from Class Charts, Acceleration Plans and SIMs/SISRA to plan challenging and accessible lessons.
2. **MEET AND GREET** your class at the door to create a calm and purposeful start to each lesson. Also take this opportunity to check uniform as appropriate.
3. **MAKE EVERY SECOND COUNT:** Plan a starter/Do Now activity at the beginning of each lesson to engage students straight away and discourage poor punctuality to lessons.
4. **BIGGER PICTURE:** Share the lesson objectives to enable students to understand their learning journey.
5. **NO PASSIVE LEARNERS:** Plan a variety of activities in the lesson to engage all learners e.g. group work, self-assessment, peer assessment, paired work, kinaesthetic tasks, extended writing etc. as appropriate.
6. **STEPS TO SUCCESS:** Use positive behaviour management strategies and language to reinforce good behaviour and create a positive climate for learning. Adhere to the Behaviour Management policy to address any poor behaviour.
7. **NO HANDS UP:** Use appropriate questioning strategies to check for students' understanding at key points throughout the lesson e.g. targeted questioning, one to one conversation, "chunking" tasks, modelling etc.
8. **HIGH CHALLENGE:** Low threat: Create a climate where work is critiqued and not the individual so as students feel confident to take risks and make mistakes.
9. **CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT:** Plan opportunities for students to respond to teacher feedback – verbal, written, MAD time and ensure that previous learning is repeatedly revisited for retrieval practice.
10. **END AND SEND** the class off to their next lesson in a calm and positive way. Again take this opportunity to check uniform as appropriate and observe corridor behaviour.

BELONG BELIEVE ACHIEVE



**“We pledge to make
EVERY STUDENT feel
SAFE and VALUED and to
INSPIRE and CHALLENGE
them to ACHIEVE their best
in every lesson”**

BELONG BELIEVE ACHIEVE