

Westley Campus

Learning and Teaching Policy



Issue No	Author/Owner	Date Written	Agreed by Curriculum Committee	Approved by Full Governing Body	Review Date
Issue 1	M Smart				

Introduction

This policy is intended to have a positive impact upon the learning and teaching process in Westley.

This policy is deliberately concise and focuses upon those elements of the learning and teaching process which will make the biggest difference to the quality of learning and teaching in our schools.

Implementation guidelines for schools are included as Appendix 1.

Rationale

- The key to a successful learning and teaching policy is the extent to which has a positive impact upon the learning process in our schools.
- This framework articulates with the aims stated in the Department's Service Improvement Plan, which in turn links with the Integrated Children's Services Plan.
- This framework adopts a learner focus by describing the entitlements and responsibilities of all learners **(staff and pupils)**.
- All learners are entitled to experience these minimum expectations in our schools.

This framework is based upon three inter-connected principles:

1. All learners should be treated with unconditional positive regard (see below)
2. Learners need to be engaged for learning to take place
3. The development of teaching and learning should be a collaborative enterprise

Definition of Unconditional Positive Regard:

- Unconditional – suspension of judgement about a person
- Positive – adopt a positive perspective
- Regard – the outlook adopted towards another person

“Judge the deed, not the person”

The fundamentals building blocks of good practice:

All learners are entitled to expect that:

1. Intentions are shared at the beginning of any lesson.
2. They are provided with quality feedback
3. Lessons are summarised at the end of the learning session
4. Their learning is supported by the use of appropriate questioning techniques
5. They are enabled and encouraged to make a full contribution

6. That the context for learning is regularly reinforced
7. They are provided with advice about what to do next to further their learning
8. They are provided with regular opportunities to give feedback about their learning experiences
9. Their feedback is used to modify and improve the learning process
10. That their learning is enhanced by appropriate use of digital technology

Presumptions about the learning environment

All learners are entitled to expect that their learning will take place in an environment:

1. which is safe and stimulating for learning
2. where their individual needs are taken into account
3. where mutual trust and respect is encouraged among all learners
4. which encourages learners to engage in their own learning

Presumptions about content

All learners are entitled to expect to be provided with:

1. learning opportunities which enable them to experience success
2. opportunities which extend their understanding and competence
3. content appropriate to their level of understanding and competence
4. resources which will engage and stimulate the learning process
5. a pace of learning which maintains and stimulates interest

Presumptions about Rules, Standards and Conduct.

Learners are entitled to expect to have:

1. rules and expectations explained and reinforced
2. rules and expectations consistently applied and upheld
3. actions and decisions being explained
4. to be treated with equity

Presumptions about Learning Experiences

Learners are entitled to expect to be:

1. enabled to work and learn as individuals, pairs and groups
2. encouraged to develop an understanding of themselves as learners
3. enabled to investigate areas of personal interest
4. helped to develop research skills
5. encouraged to be creative and develop problem solving skills

Presumptions about Information Literacy

Learners are entitled to expect to:

1. have access to appropriate resources from the World Wide Web
2. have best use made of their digital literacy
3. encouraged to engage in the learning process through digital opportunities
4. to be directed towards appropriate resources available on the World Wide Web

Presumptions about Learners' Responsibilities

Learners have a responsibility to:

1. Respond appropriately to being treated with unconditional positive regard
2. Have respect for the rights of others to learn
3. Accept the opportunity to become actively engaged in their own learning
4. Provide feedback about their learning in a constructive manner
5. Work constructively with and support other learners

APPENDIX 1

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOLS

These guidelines describe how we intend to enable schools to develop their own strategy to fulfil our aspirations about teaching and learning contained within the Learning and Teaching Policy.

OUR GOAL

To ENGAGE pupils in their learning with a view to developing the four capacities identified in A Curriculum for Excellence:

- Responsible citizens;
- Effective contributors;
- Confident individuals;
- Successful learners

OUR APPROACH

We believe that schools can identify a range of entry points to engage teachers in developing their practice. Examples of entry points might include: Assessment is for Learning; Learning Teams; Enterprising Classrooms; or Behaviour Management. Each of these entry points can be equally effective in helping teachers to fulfill our shared goals. By attempting to see the links between these entry points, which are often characterised as very discrete initiatives (often because different people have a particular responsibility), we can create a very different kind of strategy than is the norm - and hopefully one that is more effective.

Characteristics of our approach:

Top down initiatives to develop teaching and learning have a limited impact;

We believe that all teachers wish to continually seek to develop and improve their practice. We should not characterize teaching and learning initiatives as “fixing” a deficit in practice but see them as an enhancement to existing “good” practice;

Schools should seek to develop a strategy which encourages and empowers teachers to take risks with their practice;

Schools should develop strategies which result in action and which have an identifiable positive impact upon the learning process;

Schools should try to offer alternative entry points to suit teachers’ interests and preferences;

There is no single model for good practice and that diversity can be accepted as long we can satisfy the entitlements identified within our Learning and Teaching Policy;

Our staff development programmes should be focused upon supporting Learning and Teaching Policy;

Gradual, collective and sustained progress in teaching and learning is preferable to sudden, individual and short-term activity;

Schools and clusters should attempt to create a “critical mass” within their schools which encourages and supports teachers to develop their practice;

School leaders need to prioritize and demonstrate an active commitment to developing teaching and learning.

IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

Schools should consider using this checklist to develop their own unique Teaching and Learning Strategy.

Stage 1 Reflecting and comparing

Reflect upon the Learning and Teaching Policy and identify areas of practice which may need particular focus.

Reflect upon the Service Improvement Framework and identify areas which need to be reflected in your school's Learning and Teaching Strategy

Use the initiative mapping tool (currently under development) to reflect upon existing initiatives ongoing in the school and other initiatives which could be used as entry points for teachers.

Engage in a dialogue with staff, pupils and parents.

Identify overlap between various initiatives.

Stage 2 Selecting your areas of focus

Select your key areas of focus bearing in mind areas of overlap.

Stage 3 Planning

Plan how you intend to take forwards each of the various elements of your teaching and learning strategy

Use the five key questions for school development planning for each of the elements of your strategy, i.e. What are you going to do? Why are you doing it? How are you going to do it? When are you going to do it? What difference will it make?

Use the Task Management Tracker to integrate the planning process

Stage 4 Implementation

Ensure that all members of the school community are informed of progress and involved in planned actions

Follow the actions identified in your task management tracker

Monitor progress at regular intervals

Modify your planned actions in response to the reality of implementation

Stage 5 Evaluation

Identify intelligent evaluation systems which will provide you with robust evidence to judge the impact of your strategy on the teaching and learning process.

Use the available data to make judgements about the effectiveness of your strategy.

Stage 6 Realignment and revision

Having judged the effectiveness of your strategy consider making strategic changes to improve the impact on teaching and learning.