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## Crofton School - Teaching and Learning Policy

We make the education of our students our first concern. The true test of our effectiveness is in the progress and learning attributes of our students. We are positive role models and consistently act with honesty and integrity. We have strong subject knowledge and keep our knowledge and skills up to date. We are reflective, self-critical and acknowledge that we are life-long learners. We show our value and our love of learning to our students by planning well structured, engaging and enjoyable lessons. We are committed to enabling our students to be independent learners. We forge positive professional relationships and work with parents in the best interests of our students.

We use a professional vocabulary that emphasises the characteristics of learning and the learning processes. This vocabulary builds learning power and recognises that intelligence is expandable. Therefore:

We actively try to incorporate the following words and phrases into our vernacular:

- 'Learn' and 'learning' are often better alternatives to 'work' and 'task'
- Take risks - it does not matter if you make a mistake
- Ready to take feedback and advice. Reflect on mistakes, learn from them and improve
- Use high quality discourse, incorporating correct use of technical language
- Show curiosity (ask questions, be sceptical, be analytical) - questioning
- Use imagination and creativity
- Develop the mastery skills/knowledge and ensure students show a depth of learning
- Encourage problem solving and opportunities for independent learning

We follow six evidence-informed pedagogical principles that cut to the core of successful teaching:

1. Challenge
2. Explanation
3. Modelling
4. Practice
5. Feedback
6. Questioning

These six principles support our journey towards becoming an exceptional school. They allow us to develop the key skills needed to be exceptional classroom practitioners whilst still allowing us the flexibility to implement them as we see fit. Using the six principles provides us with a common language that is meaningful to all.

We have proper regard for our school values:

**Kindness   Ambition   Diligence**

We believe that effective learning and teaching takes place at Crofton School when our policy is followed:

### **High Expectations and High Challenge**

Drawing on expert subject knowledge set consistently high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge students of all abilities, with targeted interventions for all reportable groups

- Plan meaningful, challenging and varied learning activities for class learning and for home learning that provide opportunities for rapid sustained progress. Pitch high, differentiate down.
- Plan lessons aimed at mastery of age-related expectations and tailoring work to the needs of the students.
- Setting challenging activities to match students' needs and encourage independent learning
- Challenge students in feedback and questioning. Dig deeper into your subject and use DIRT (directed improved and reflection time).
- Contribute to a regularly update schemes of work in use so that they are sufficiently challenging for the needs of all learners and encourage problem solving and thinking skills.
- Ensure schemes of work incorporate mastery and age-related expectations. Both summative and formative assessment opportunities are clearly identified within each scheme of work.
- Share learning objectives every lesson so they are understood by every student.
- Share learning outcomes every lesson, though some may continue over to more than one lesson depending upon the learning experience.
- Use assessment criteria, target grades and success criteria to clearly indicate expectations and degree of challenge.
- Know all your students well. The learning processes to which they best respond are taken into account in planning lessons. This includes Pupil Premium students, SEND and all reportable groups.
- Be excited by the challenge of planning and delivering learning to students with appetites for intellectual: discourse; stimuli; enquiry as well as success. Plan opportunities and be ambitious for students to reach the highest grades.
- Intervene early when a student or group is not making progress. Base interventions on sound assessments, recording and tracking. Narrowing achievement gaps rapidly is a priority for us.
- Reward good progress and achievement.

### **Accurate Assessment**

Continually, systematically and accurately assess to provide evidence of student progress. Use formative and summative assessment to secure good evidence of students' progress (Assessment OF learning). Use frequent, detailed and accurate feedback during learning so that students understand how to improve (Assessment FOR learning).

- Check that students understand the meaning of the learning objectives and outcomes. Revisit these during the lesson. Systematically and effectively check students' understanding and progress throughout the lesson anticipating where intervention is needed for most impact.
- Involve students in the assessment process so that they have ownership of their own learning by providing clear assessment criteria linked to the objectives and outcomes.
- Engage students in reflecting on their own learning by using peer, group and self-assessment strategies. This may include such strategies as modelling, peer recommendations for improvements or grading their own work from assessment criteria. But, this must be verified and checked for accuracy by teacher feedback to maintain high levels of quality control and validity. Motivate students with formative feedback. Students need precise evaluative feedback in order to improve, progress and be successful. Their exercise books, should demonstrate progress.

- Provide opportunities and specific time for students to act upon formative feedback. DIRT strategies should be used.
- Assess students frequently (including at least 1 common assessment for every subject every half term). Record and track progress using subject data bases.
- Challenge underachievement. Intervention strategies include: speaking to the student, setting individual improvement objectives, asking students to repeat a piece of work, providing models of good practice, setting students extra tasks, adjusting individual or group objectives or activities, speaking to or writing to parents, peer support or mentoring, discussion with tutor or subject leader or placing the student on subject report.

### **Active Engagement**

Enthuse, engage and motivate students to learn and foster their intellectual curiosity and enthusiasm for learning. We use our expertise and subject knowledge well to develop students' autonomy, knowledge, skills and understanding.

- Employ a wide range of well-judged, imaginative and effective student-centred learning activities.
- Promote development of such activities by sharing best practice with colleagues.
- Provide students with opportunities to work in a variety of ways with a range of resources. Students learn best when the learning activity is enhanced by the right choice of balance of individual, paired, group or whole class approach.

### **High Quality Talk**

Use a vocabulary that emphasises the characteristics of learning and learning processes. Using the right vocabulary often and well builds learning power and intelligence. Provide lots of stimulating and intellectual opportunities for students to talk.

- Insist on the correct use of subject-specific, technical and target language during learning.
- Use questions to clarify, confirm and consolidate student understanding.
- Use directed higher-order open questioning skills to extend and challenge student thinking and problem solving.
- Ask 'what' your students are learning rather than what they are doing.
- Develop an understanding in students about explicitly 'how' are they learning (metacognition or L2L).

### **Developing Crofton Learners**

We enable students to develop the skills and the desire to learn for themselves, where appropriate, including setting appropriate home learning to develop their understanding. We draw upon our expert subject knowledge and high expectations so that students are motivated and taking responsibility for their learning.

- Let students know what they need to do to be successful in their learning, emphasising their personal responsibility and provide learner-centred tasks.
- Provide an environment where risk-taking is encouraged and positively reinforced. Remind students that 'it does not matter if you make a mistake'.
- Promote high levels of resilience and confidence in students when tackling challenging activities.

- Praise and reward students for taking risks, using imagination, creativity and initiative.
- Provide structures and strategies conducive to the growth of more autonomous learning such as: scaffolding, modelling, effective study skills, research skills, directed formative feedback (DIRT).
- Model our love of learning and your commitment to life-long learning always. Do this with passion and enthusiasm.
- Grow student autonomy in their development of crucial skills in reading, writing, communication and maths (RWCM) across all subjects. Make time for the explicit improvements of students' literacy and of their ability to communicate clearly and confidently. We share responsibility for improving student's numeracy, ICT and citizenship skills. Make spelling and literacy in a way of highlights its importance yet motivates students to want to improve these life skills.
- Use technology effectively and innovatively and in a way that promotes independence. Students are encouraged to take advantage of their own BYOD in lessons to access growing opportunities to build autonomy. Teach students wise internet use, model how to use it and help them to identify what is valid and what is not. Teach then that 'copying and pasting' is not skilful.
- Incorporate the Gatsby benchmarks where possible into lessons to support lifelong learning and preparing students for the world of work.

### **Behaviour Management and Relationships**

Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment. Accept that good learning behaviours generally come from planning and delivering excellent lessons.

- Consistently promote positive, kind behaviour and good relationships within the classroom in line with the school behaviour policy.
- Fully include all students in learning activities in a lesson. Do not send a student to wait outside the classroom for longer than a couple of minutes and only for the reason to 'cool down'.
- Ensure planning and selection of learning activities that are engaging and promote good behaviour.
- Celebrate and praise student achievement and progress at every opportunity.
- Encourage students to take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour, and to demonstrate respect for others and their school community.
- Create and maintain a purposely learning environment.
- Provide a positive, safe and supportive environment to ensure that all students feel confident and secure in their own learning, and that they feel confident in utilising their independent learning skills.
- Encourage students to try new experiences and take risks without fear of failure.
- Encourage students to be considerate, reflective, polite and respectful of others. Show students how to listen attentively to others and not call out.

### **Rules and Routines**

Adhering to specific rules and routines leads to consistency, maintaining high expectations and outstanding practice. 'Outstanding schools operate with a very high degree of consistency' (Sir Alan Steer).

- Greet students at the door, challenge poor punctuality. Students enter the class in a controlled manner and sit according to a plan decided by the teacher (Teachers should share this plan with cover staff). This is a strategic plan to help to differentiate, challenge underachievement and promote effective learning strategies.
- The learning environment is well ordered stimulating and conducive to learning. Provide a clean, tidy and safe environment. Teach students to assess and manage risk appropriately.
- Students have their basic equipment on their desks at the start of every lesson. Check that all students are 'ready to learn'.
- Start lessons promptly.
- Take a class register at or as near to the beginning of every lesson as possible.
- Ensure that uniform is in line with the school policy at all times.
- Agree the role of the LSA or any other adults, introduce them to the class and demonstrate your partnership in students' learning. Provide appropriate guidance ideally prior to the lesson or at the very start. Communicate regularly with the LSA about how teaching can be structured to support students.
- Prepare resources in advance of the lesson to meet the needs of the full range of learners in the class and share these with support staff wherever possible.
- Share timings with students to aid structure and pace. Use time well. Every lesson counts.
- Prompt students to think with starter activities which are an integral part of all lessons. They include group questions on previous learning, problem solving in pairs, acting on feedback to improve work, finding out tasks or challenges which will feed into the lesson and learning objectives.
- At the end of the lesson and prior to a formal dismissal under the instruction of the teacher, all students stand behind their chairs quietly. There must be a calm and orderly dismissal by the teacher. Teachers should stand in the corridors to ensure an orderly exit.
- Ensure sufficient time to issue and explain clearly any home learning.