



Anthony Gell School

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

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Teaching and Learning Policy

Vision

Anthony Gell is a community in which learners are safe and happy, well supported and inspired. Within this learning environment students are confident, aware of their potential and work hard in order to achieve academic excellence and self-fulfilment. Students and staff share a sense of pride in our collective achievements and a sense of belonging to something really quite special.

Anthony Gell School is a community where everyone, whatever their role, works hard to create a learning environment which includes a rich and varied curriculum; this curriculum is evident throughout all of the different aspects of the school's life. It is a curriculum which provides us with opportunities to explore, learn more about the world in which we live, and equips us well for future learning and employment.

In order to do this, we believe it is important that everyone involved develops the skills and knowledge necessary to become self-motivated, independent and confident learners, with the social awareness to make a difference and care about ourselves, others and our environment.

Through the breadth and depth of our curriculum, we continually endeavour to create opportunities that will highlight and enhance the important skills we value, including literacy and numeracy.

We constantly strive to improve our ability to work as a team, by developing our sense of empathy and understanding, as well as knowing when and how to lead.

Encouraged to be creative, and confident to take risks when learning, we are not afraid to make mistakes and aim to be resilient in the face of difficulties. We support one another and celebrate our own successes as much as we celebrate those of others.

We endeavour to be more self-aware and make good decisions with regards to our mental and physical health. We work, as part of a larger community, to develop a careful awareness, understanding and acceptance of others' beliefs, opinions and individuality.

We set ourselves ambitious goals and work hard to achieve these.

We seek not to prescribe a 'preferred' lesson format. There are many different ways to teach the full range of the curriculum and we would prefer to encourage our staff to use their training, judgement and experience to adapt their approach to be suitable to the classroom and context in which they are teaching.

Teaching and Learning at Anthony Gell School

Teaching and learning is at the heart of our school, as we seek to ensure that students make excellent progress during their time with us. Progress is not only defined by academic achievement but also includes our students' development into well-rounded individuals who are equipped to contribute to society in a positive and productive way when they leave us as young adults.

Minimum expectations of lesson at Anthony Gell School

Students should know what they are learning about and where this fits into building on what they know, can do and understand about the subject they are experiencing.

Students should know where they are in their learning and how to get better (see ARR policy for further detail - [https://www.anthonygell.co.uk/docs/policies/Data - Assessment Recording and Reporting Policy .pdf](https://www.anthonygell.co.uk/docs/policies/Data_-_Assessment_Recording_and_Reporting_Policy_.pdf))

Teachers use a wide range of assessment techniques which include: questioning, quizzes, performances, formal tests or other Assessment for Learning (AFL) strategies, to assess progress towards the objectives of the lesson. Staff use this information to adapt the curriculum and address misconceptions.

Learning is adapted to provide appropriate challenge for all our students to ensure they make the best progress possible towards their aspirational targets. Teachers will use their knowledge to reflect and adapt upon their teaching to ensure that the level of challenge is appropriate. Staff are tasked to consider the student rather than the class or the group.

Students are actively engaged in their learning – activities are planned to make them think about and comment upon the information that is presented to them rather than being passive recipients.

Paired work and group work are used where appropriate and are planned carefully. Students are expected to actively listen to the views of others, offer their own opinions and challenge each other constructively to share, develop and evaluate ideas.

Learning should start as soon as possible once the lesson begins. A 'Do Now' activity is used as students enter the room to ensure that lost learning time is minimised and all lessons make a strong start.

Learning cannot always be broken down into one-hour chunks, therefore teachers will review progress at appropriate points within lessons but there may not always be a set end of lesson 'plenary'.

Students are seated in ways that aid learning and this is decided by the class teacher.

A range of questioning techniques are used to promote higher order thinking and to check for any misunderstandings that can then be addressed.

Lessons are planned to retrieve knowledge and understanding by incorporating a range of strategies which may include the learning sciences of 'spaced practice' and 'interleaving' (see appendix 1 for an overview of the Learning Sciences). Retrieval of knowledge and checks on understanding are planned as part of our Schemes of Work, to ensure that students have frequent opportunities to build what they know, understand and can do.

Students have transferred key knowledge into their long-term memory, or are being helped to do so.

Progress for All

We aim to ensure that all students make good progress. We are particularly focussed on the following groups where there has been, or is a risk of underachievement: Pupil Premium/ Disadvantaged students (DA), SEND students and Boys (in some areas of the curriculum). These groups of students receive additional/targeted support depending on their needs. Teachers are aware of the needs of these students and plan for those accordingly. Leaders and Managers in school support staff in monitoring student progress, including that of discreet groups of students, and teachers are responsible for in-class interventions to support progress if students have fallen behind. We also have dedicated learning mentors in school who intervene directly with students from these groups to address gaps in knowledge, improve understanding and accelerate progress.

Cultural Capital / SMSC / British Values

Cultural capital is the accumulation of knowledge, behaviours, and skills that a student can draw upon and which demonstrates their cultural awareness, knowledge and competence; it is one of the key ingredients a student will draw upon to be successful in society, their career and the world of work.

Cultural capital promotes social mobility and success; it gives a student power. It helps them achieve goals and become successful. We recognise that for students to aspire and be successful academically and in the wider areas of their lives they need to be given rich and sustained opportunities to develop their cultural capital.

Each subject taught within the school day makes its own contribution to students' cultural capital development as well as the vast wealth of opportunities that our students have outside the academic curriculum which develops these vital traits.

We encourage our students to make the most of every opportunity to develop their cultural capital. We offer a highly enriched curriculum experience for our students. A small sample of the types of opportunities we offer are University Visit Days, RAF teamwork sessions, Student Voice, our Nurture Group, National Citizenship Service, collective acts of worship, domestic and foreign visits such as skiing in Austria, visits to local places of worship, exchange visits and a full programme of work experience for Year 10 and Year 12 students.

Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural Development and British Values:

We recognise and firmly believe that the development of students, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally plays a significant part not only in their ability to learn and achieve but in their ability to relate fully to and have the ability to access the world they live in. We therefore aim to provide an

education that provides our students with opportunities to explore and develop their own values, whilst recognising that those of others may differ. Beliefs, spiritual awareness, high standards of personal behaviour including a positive caring attitude towards other people, an understanding of their social and cultural traditions and an appreciation of the diversity and richness of other cultures are all critical skills and dispositions that we nurture, encourage and develop through our taught subjects and within our wider curriculum.

In summary, we aim to provide:

- A balanced and rich curriculum. Students are encouraged to engage with the wider world and think about their place within it;
- Opportunities for students to actively engage with the democratic process, for example Student Voice playing a part in decision making at school;
- Citizenship and Religion (CR) lessons and a planned Tutor time curriculum which enables students to discuss issues beyond academic study, and which equips them with life skills;
- A varied assembly programme through which teachers and visitors present topics which help students to reflect upon themes which help foster an understanding of different cultural traditions, appreciate British culture, and understand right and wrong;
- Enrichment across the whole school which includes sporting, academic, musical, and other cultural opportunities.
- In developing our provision of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC), we also ensure that the promotion of fundamental British Values is fully embedded in the school ethos and curriculum.

Cross-Curricular Skills

We have two dedicated Learning Mentors in school who are focussed on the delivery of cross-curricular literacy and numeracy skills. Staff are trained and these skills are integrated and cohesive in lessons where they are appropriate. Our staff lead whole school projects to engage students in the wider benefits of literacy and numeracy as well as supporting revision and intervention sessions specifically aimed at boosting skills, knowledge and understanding in the Maths and English curriculums. There is also ongoing work with parents/carers to assist in supporting the work of their children for example we share videos of how to teach specific maths to enable parents/carers to support their children with homework tasks.

Cross Curricular Literacy and Numeracy

Developing Reading

We use 'Accelerated Reader' (<https://www.renlearn.co.uk/accelerated-reader/>) throughout Key Stage 3 to encourage reading and to track progress. Students undertake half-termly 'STAR Reader' tests <https://www.renlearn.co.uk/star-assessments/> so they can see their own progress.

All students in Years 7 and 8 have a dedicated reading lesson in their Curriculum offer, to encourage engagement with reading and the school Library. We have an extensive and routinely updated library that includes an extensive E-reader library. All students can access the library through an App where they can reserve books, download E-books and browse the stock of both the physical and electronic libraries.

Staff have been trained in strategies to support reading within the classroom and we have a stock of 'reading pens' that are in use across the school to offer support for those students who need it.

These pens are digital readers and when scanned across a page of text will translate the text into the spoken word so the student can hear the words as well as read them. We also have a bank of dedicated E-Readers that are used during intervention sessions. Each Key Stage 3 tutor group takes part in 'First Chapter Fridays' where they read collaboratively and explore a range of texts, with the aim of exposing students to a range of material in a supportive environment.

As we develop our curriculum it is our intention to incorporate more fiction texts within curriculum areas across the school to further raise the profile of reading. This is currently being developed within the Global Faculty within History, Geography and RE in Key Stage 3.

Teaching Assistants

Teaching Assistants (TAs) are engaged in a range of out of class interventions that seek to boost the skills of students who are identified as needing an extra level of intervention and support. These sessions are thoroughly planned and delivered as part of the learning experience for our students rather than being viewed as a 'bolt on'.

Teaching Assistants are an integral part of learning at Anthony Gell School and their role will vary from student to student and lesson to lesson.

Our TAs aim to offer the appropriate balance of support and encouragement while promoting independence and resilience. TAs have a good knowledge of the students and classes they are supporting. That knowledge is shared in a feedback loop to teachers to adapt the curriculum and pastoral care of the students they are supporting.

In many ways TAs are the experts with regard to specific groups of students and their pro-active approach is vital to securing progress for the students they support.

Use of ICT to Support Teaching and Learning

We use the Microsoft 365 package as our vehicle for lesson preparation and resource storage. We use Sharepoint and Teams to share information between staff and students. We are in a phase of rapid growth and development with our use of ICT with some members of staff trialling the use of Onenote in the classroom.

Homework

Homework in Key Stage 3 (KS3) and Key Stage 4 (KS4) is set to a timetable and all tasks are uploaded to the student intranet. KS5 homework is set by individual class teachers on a lesson by lesson basis.

Homework in KS3 takes the form of weekly English and Maths tasks designed to take approximately 30 minutes each and then a 2- hour extended project, on a rota basis that covers all other curriculum areas. These tasks can take many forms and are specifically designed to be open-ended to cater for the varying interests of our students and curriculum requirements. We strive to give students choice within these tasks, to encourage them to manage their time and to enrich their experiences within different subjects.

KS4 homework is set in all core and options subjects on a 2-weekly timetable. Tasks will vary greatly from short, tightly defined tasks to larger, more open projects. This is to allow for the practice of skills and the retrieval of knowledge to allow the commitment of learning to the long term memory.

In KS5 we put a much greater emphasis on independent learning. Homework tasks of varying lengths and complexity will be set by class teachers but all students are also expected to complete

self directed study by reading around their curriculums, practising their exam technique and reviewing the work they have done with their class teachers to ensure they can address any knowledge / skills gaps they may have. There is a wide range of easily available support available to students both through our dedicated sixth form learning mentor but also from our specialist teachers who have the depth and breadth of subject knowledge to be able to support our students.

We have a homework club available to SEND students who will benefit from the small group support that this brings.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors

Have responsibility for:

Ensuring that this policy is in place, monitored and reviewed.

Ensuring that any complaint arising from the operation of this policy is dealt with in accordance with the School's Complaints Policy

Encouraging, supporting and recognising good practice.

The Senior Leadership Team

Are responsible for:

Ensuring that staff, students and parents/carers are aware of their responsibilities within this policy and encouraging the dialogue that comes from this.

Providing timely and effective CPD (training) to enable staff to fulfil their roles effectively.

Provide opportunities for colleagues to share and celebrate good practice.

To lead the quality Assurance (QA) processes to ensure that consistently high standards of teaching and learning are maintained across the school.

Directors of Teaching and Learning (DTLs) / Assistant Directors of Teaching and Learning (ADTLs)

Are responsible for:

Planning for, monitoring and supporting the learning of all students within their faculties. Working in partnership with Pastoral Managers, tutors, teaching staff and the Learning Support team.

Discussing, highlighting and disseminating best practice in their own faculty areas and across the school as appropriate.

Ensuring that homework timetables are followed and quality assuring the tasks that are set.

Monitoring individual student progress and the progress data for the cohorts within their faculties utilising a wide range of sources of information. Where there are concerns the DTL / ADTL will work in conjunction with colleagues to ensure a joined up approach is taken to improving progress.

Implementing the Quality Assurance programme as per the school's policy.

Subject teachers

Are responsible for:

Implementing the school policies to ensure the progress of students in their care; they should do this by using their professional judgement, experience and training.

Pro-actively engaging with relevant CPD to ensure they are well trained with current teaching pedagogies as well as specialist training from within their own subject areas.

Seeking support from their line manager if and when necessary to ensure that students are making the best progress possible.

Communicating with students, tutors, Pastoral Managers, parents/carers and DTLs/ ADTLs to share successes and concerns when appropriate.

Adhering to and championing the Teacher Standards at all times.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/665522/Teachers_standard_information.pdf

Students

Are responsible for:

Coming to school with the attitude of wanting to work and succeed.

Ensuring they are equipped for the day including books and equipment.

Listening to and acting upon the advice and feedback from staff in school.

Providing feedback to the school when necessary in order to ensure that they can access their learning effectively.

Making the most of all the opportunities that are available to them.

Completing all the work they are set to the best of their abilities including homework and revision tasks.

Parents / Carers

Are responsible for:

Working in partnership with the school to support their child to the best of their abilities; this involves keeping in touch with school to both give and receive feedback and engaging with opportunities provided such as Parents' Evenings.

Ensuring that their child organises themselves to be appropriately equipped for the day ahead.

Encouraging their child to work hard, participate positively in school life and make the most of the opportunities available to them.

Appendix 1: An overview of the Learning Sciences

