



Earlston High School

Teaching & Learning Policy

Aim :

To help pupils develop their skills and knowledge to the highest levels and to grow as individuals to become respectful, responsible and honest with a commitment to excellence.

Rationale:

Every teacher affects the extent and quality of the learning process for our pupils and contributes towards attitudes to learning that will remain with pupils throughout their lives.

It is recognised that our knowledge and expertise is continually evolving and we have to actively engage in continuous professional development to ensure that we take account of the multiple methodologies, theories, strategies and philosophies that help us to improve the quality of the learning experience of our pupils.

Principles

Our Teaching & Learning policy reflects, supports and is informed by:

- How Good is Our School
- The Curriculum for Excellence
- Assessment is for Learning
- Our school values
- School policy on Monitoring & Tracking, Assessment and Reporting, ICT

Our Teaching & Learning policy will succeed if teachers consider:

- The environment for learning
- The range of approaches to teaching and the varied styles of learning
- The ways in which learning is organised

Our Learning and Teaching Policy will have been successful if it results in:

- Improved achievement for all learners
- Improved confidence and self esteem among teachers and learners
- Enhanced awareness and understanding of learning and teaching approaches among teachers and learners
- Young people becoming successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to the society that they live in.

Framework for Effective Teaching & Learning

The following framework is accepted as necessary for the most effective Teaching & Learning within the school to be implemented and monitored. It enables the identification of priorities for development and ensures a clear expectation of what is required within a classroom.

Effective Planning
Effective Teaching
Effective Learning
Effectively Meeting Needs
Effective Assessment and Reporting
Effective Monitoring & Evaluation

Effective Planning

Planning will be effective when:

- Departments provide clear and concise specifications of what pupils are supposed to learn within the subject.
- Departmental development plans take account of national and local curriculum guidelines, HMI advice and school policies.
- Learning activities, including homework and assessments are planned to make effective use of pupil and teacher time.
- Opportunities to plan with colleagues are effectively structured.

Effective Teaching

Teaching will be effective when:

- The teacher acts as a constructive mediator for the lesson
- There is thorough long and short-term planning at individual, department and whole school level
- Opportunities for review and homework are planned and have a clear purpose
- A variety of learning and teaching strategies are employed including the appropriate use of ICT
- Learning intentions and success criteria are shared with pupils
- Interaction with pupils involves skilled and varied questioning as well as listening and responding
- There is a well ordered environment where learners feel safe.
- Standards of behaviour are agreed and applied consistently
- Teachers take account of different learning preferences and aptitudes
- Learning activities are differentiated to match closely to individual needs
- Assessment and reporting measure progress and identify next steps in learning. Assessment should be both formative and summative and draw on evidence from a range of contexts.
- Appropriate targets are agreed by teacher and pupils.

Effective Learning

Learning will be effective if the following basic principles are taken into account:

- Intelligence is not fixed. All children are born with potential and we cannot be sure of the learning limits of any child
- Individuals learn in different ways and benefit from different forms of support
- There are various forms of intelligence which provide different routes to learning: this calls upon teachers to know how to reinforce one form with another.
- Physical and emotional well-being impact on our ability to learn
- Motivation and achievement are closely linked. Praise and encouragement when honestly given and deserved, enhance achievement.
- Learning is more effective when there is an opportunity to think things through for ourselves / individually / independently.
- Cognitive functions of learning need to be understood.
- Breaking learning up into small steps is helpful but it is equally important to provide the 'big picture' or overview.
- Co-operative work has positive effects on pupils' achievement, but such effects are dependent on the existence of a shared goal for the group and individual accountability for the attainment of that goal.

Effectively Meeting Needs

The needs of individual pupils will be effectively met if:

- The needs are formatively and summatively identified from a variety of sources including information from pupils, parents and specialist staff
- Learning activities are differentiated to match closely to the individual's needs, their stage of development, aptitudes and interests.

Effective Assessment and Reporting

Assessment & reporting will be effective if:

- Assessment features as a key element in the planning of activities and programmes
- Assessment involves a range of activities
- Recording of assessment information is accurate, effective and systematic

Effective Monitoring & Evaluation

As a staff and as individual teachers we can reflect on our practice using a number of methods:

- The publication 'How Good is our School' sets out a structured way for individuals, departments or the whole school to evaluate effective learning and teaching.
- The system of departmental reviews analyses subject performance information and its implications for learning and teaching
- 'Peer moderation', where teachers observe each other teaching and offer feedback is an excellent way to share good practice
- Tracking of pupil progress
- Cross marking/assessment moderation
- Working across faculties and in cross-curricular working groups will enhance our knowledge of the generic skills
- Sharing Classroom Practice
- Sampling work
- Pupil evaluation
- Departmental sharing of good practice within DM's and at L&T meetings.

Supporting the Learning & Teaching Policy

In school we intend to support the development of learning and teaching by :

- Sharing good practice within and across departments with a particular focus e.g. using ICT
- Encouraging staff to review learning and teaching books, journals - review and recommend to other staff
- Identifying appropriate speakers to address staff at whole school staff meetings
- Maintaining and extending the use of the school web site –developing a school learning and teaching section
- Encouraging and supporting opportunities for departments to visit same subject departments in other schools within Learning Community
- Enabling a planned programme within departments for opportunities for team teaching/shadowing
- Promoting our own good practice
- Exploring ways of involving pupils in the development of learning and teaching
- Exploring opportunities to include pupils in the quality assurance process
- Exploring opportunities to extend partnership with parents in our learning and teaching
- Encouraging and supporting cross sector initiatives such as Primary /Secondary liaison, curricular development and joint in-service opportunities.
- The work of the Learning & Teaching group
- The work of the Learning Community Learning & Teaching group.