



DAME ALICE OWEN'S SCHOOL

Curriculum Package

(reviewed February 2016)

including

- **Curriculum Statement** *(revised June 2015)*
- **Teaching & Learning Policy**
- **Assessment Policy** *(revised February 2016)*

Rewritten policy first approved in: February 2008

Reviewed and agreed by

the Governing Body Curriculum Committee:

- Full Curriculum Package February 2016
- Curriculum Statement only June 2015

Next reviews: the full Curriculum Package: Spring 2018

the Curriculum Statement only: Spring 2017

The Curriculum Statement is reviewed annually

The Curriculum Package is reviewed every two years

Policy monitored by Dr Matt James, Curriculum Director

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DAME ALICE OWEN'S SCHOOL CURRICULUM STATEMENT

Dame Alice Owen's School aims:

- to provide a broad, relevant, balanced and differentiated curriculum that has regard to the National Curriculum for all students
- in developing the curriculum to ensure the promotion and teaching of Personal Health and Social Education
- to ensure all students share and are given access to that common curriculum

- to ensure that the curriculum meets all legal requirements
- to enable all students to progress and achieve their full potential within that curriculum through specialist teaching and on-going monitoring and assessment
- to support each subject and cross curricular area with the appropriate resources
- to provide continuity of curriculum through the different Key Stages
- to monitor and review the curriculum with staff through classroom observations, work scrutiny, meetings and INSET. To introduce change to the curriculum as a result of internal discussions and in response to external requirements
- to identify areas within development planning, at departmental and at whole school level, which may need review, and to implement any change efficiently and smoothly
- to pursue actively curricular initiatives which will enhance the curriculum offered by the school
- to keep students, parents and governors informed and involved in the curriculum and any changes to that curriculum through the school website and virtual learning environment and through meetings, booklets and letters
- to involve industry, commerce, alumni and outside agencies to enrich the experience of our students
- to continue to enhance the curriculum to reflect the local, national and international community
- To promote British values including individual liberty, the rule of law, belief in personal and social responsibility, respect for diversity, including of different faiths, beliefs and lifestyles. We seek to instil in students a sense of belonging, not just to the school community, but to the wider community and to the country; and
- To ensure all areas of the curriculum promote equality and tackle prejudicial discrimination.

This statement and accompanying teaching and learning policy, together with the School and Departmental Improvement Plans, demonstrate the implementation of these curricular aims.

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DAME ALICE OWEN'S SCHOOL

Teaching and Learning Policy

Introduction

The Teaching and Learning Policy is intended to

- promote consistency and high standards throughout the school and the achievement of the school aims. It should be read in conjunction with the school's stated aims and values.
- be viewed alongside the policies for assessment, recording and reporting of student achievement, the pastoral package which includes behaviour, and the learning support and single equality policies.
- inform and involve teachers, and those to whom they are accountable, concerning the policies, procedures and plans of the school with respect to teaching and learning. It is a working document offering practical guidelines and outline procedures.

Aims: 'Outstanding Learning'

The aims of the teaching and learning policy are to ensure that the following takes place:

- Consistently high quality teaching and learning takes place throughout the school in a safe environment conducive to learning
- All students reach their highest level of personal achievement
- All students develop lively, imaginative, creative, enquiring and independent minds
- All students read, write, speak and listen effectively
- Students acquire and develop the knowledge, understanding and key skills required for life-long learning
- All teachers are supported in the teaching of outstanding learning
- All students are motivated, learn to work with others, gain confidence and a desire to succeed: personal qualities they can use to influence their own lives positively
- Common criteria and measurements are established against which outstanding teaching and learning can be recognized and against which any shortfalls can be identified and addressed

- Best practice teaching and learning is understood, shared and developed within and between departments. A number of teachers take part in the TLDW qualification (Teacher-Led Development Work), for which a key aspect of teaching and learning is researched in depth, focusing on the participants' own classroom practice. Teaching and learning developments and tips are shared across the school through Subject Leader Forum, staff meetings, staff briefings, and Learning Communities. Regular contact is maintained with departments in other schools locally, in Hertfordshire in particular. The purpose again is to share good practice either on a whole-school or on a departmental basis.

Expected outcomes

- all students are set and understand their targets
- all students are challenged and progress at least in line with their targets
- the standard of student achievement is continuously raised
- progress is comparable across departments
- through assessment for learning and other means students are aware of what they need to do to progress still further
- lessons will incorporate a wide range of approaches to accommodate the preferred learning styles of students
- all students participate actively in their own learning
- all students enjoy their learning
- when students look back on their time at school, albeit much later, they will do so with positive regard to the experience they received
- parents understand their child's progress and any strategies for further improvement.

For learning to take place it is important that the school is consistent in its practice across departments and that the highest possible standards are set within the learning environment.

Accountabilities and responsibilities:

The Governors and Senior Leadership Team are responsible for the overall implementation and monitoring of this policy, notably by ensuring the following:

- The school is appropriately staffed to ensure the curriculum is being taught
- The school is resourced and the environment is made conducive to learning
- Teaching and learning is regularly monitored to ensure that effective learning is taking place and school/departmental targets are being set and achieved
- Staff are encouraged to structure their teaching in order to improve learning
- New staff are given induction into the Teaching and Learning policy and Handbook
- There is provision of Continuing Professional Development for Teachers via INSET and other support
- Support is provided for teachers in managing student learning and behaviour
- Administrative support and technical assistance is made available
- Strategic planning, including a published School Improvement Plan which provides a clear framework for Teaching and Learning, is carried out.
- The curriculum supports the aims of the Single Equality Duty

The Subject Leader is accountable to the Senior Leadership Team and responsible for ensuring the following:

- Schemes of work are in place for all year groups with appropriate varied learning strategies
- All students are given the appropriate information about their courses (syllabus, curriculum route, modules)
- Marking and Assessment criteria are clearly explained to students. A copy of each relevant department's marking policy should be displayed in the students' books
- Regular assessment is recorded, shared across the department and monitored by the Head of Department. Student learning is reviewed with appropriate target setting
- Students are given guidance about learning styles and revision strategies
- The learning experience is consistent within each department (regular monitoring)
- Good practice is shared within the department
- INSET is provided for the subject team of teachers
- The budget is managed in a way that will maximize the benefit to learning
- Departmental Improvement Plans are published annually
- There is appropriate and effective use of the department's ICT resources
- Departments have a subject-specific policy relating to single equality which highlights aspects of the curriculum that tie in with specific equality strands and show any relevant areas for development.

The Teacher is accountable to the Subject Leader and responsible for ensuring the following:

- Lessons are structured to maximize learning.
- a secure and up - to - date knowledge and understanding of the subject is maintained
- Lessons, activities and resources are planned
- Lessons make effective use of ICT where appropriate
- Learning objectives of the lesson and expected outcomes are clearly explained
- Students are challenged and motivated
- An orderly and safe learning environment with clear sets of routines and standards is created
- A variety of appropriate learning strategies is used
- Time targets are set, where appropriate, to ensure pace
- Regular feedback is given to ensure learning is taking place
- Individual student targets are set and communicated to students and parents
- Marking and assessment procedures inform the students/parents about their progress
- Lessons are differentiated and effective use is made of Learning Support Assistants
- The learning is reinforced with a planned plenary or plenaries
- The school policies on Behaviour Management, Assessment Recording and Reporting and Homework are implemented
- Effective and efficient use of administrative support is made.

- All students are treated with respect and according to their needs and that no student feels discrimination against them through lesson content.

The student is accountable to the subject teacher and responsible for ensuring the following:

- Demonstrate willingness to engage in learning activities in a positive way and with enthusiasm
- Strategies for learning are tried out to improve learning
- Fellow students are supported in their learning
- Appropriate equipment is brought to the lesson
- Homework is noted and completed on time
- Targets are agreed and understood

The parent is responsible for ensuring the following:

- Maintaining a close liaison with school staff, in particular the form tutor and subject teachers, in order to provide positive support for learning in line with the Home-School Agreement
- Their child's homework is completed

Teaching and Learning Policy in practice

Rationale:

We aim to encourage all our students to find the most appropriate way to learn to the best of their ability. We aim to challenge and support all students in their learning by creating a learning environment which is clear, orderly, supportive, stimulating, challenging and fair.

Advanced Skills Teachers

The AST team meets regularly to review progress in teaching and learning, to promote new ideas and developments and to help plan future training for staff. Each AST has a designated subject department to help carry work forward. However, ASTs with particular expertise will be assigned to departments as appropriate.

Key elements in a good lesson

All lessons should contain the following elements listed below in some shape or form. We believe these elements are core to enable teachers to unlock a student's full potential and hence maximise their progress and level of attainment.

- **The lesson has a clear framework. Regular features should include a starter, teacher input, regular assessment and feedback to students, a plenary**
- **Learning objectives are identified and shared**
- **Effective classroom management where clear boundaries are set**
- **A variety of learning strategies are adopted reflecting the variety of preferred learning styles amongst the students**
- **All students progress and enjoy their learning**

Classroom Practice

Displays in classrooms should provide clear guidance on expectations for work and behaviour. The following basic classroom practice should take place in every lesson.

Students:

- Be punctual to lessons
- Bring all the equipment required for the lesson
- Get ready for the lesson (homework diary, exercise books, pencil case out)
- Follow the behaviour policies of the department and the school
- Be quiet when required
- Actively participate in the learning
- Respect the learning environment

Teachers:

- Be punctual to lessons
- Greet students at the door
- Take a formal register of the class
- Give clear learning objectives at the beginning of the lesson
- Offer a variety of teaching and learning methods over a course of lessons Assess what has been learnt regularly
- Review the lesson and preview next lesson
- Teach the lesson with pace
- Set homework in accordance with the homework timetable and link homework to the lesson or scheme of work objectives
- Have high expectations of students in the lesson (high challenge, low stress)
- Adopt seating plans and other classroom strategies to facilitate effective learning
- Insist that the school and departmental behaviour policies are followed

Promoting and evaluating the policy

Within school this policy will be monitored and kept under regular review by the AST team and the Subject Leaders Forum.

Specifically this will be achieved by:

- Measurement of the expected outcomes through the formal and informal monitoring systems which are already in place, namely departmental and year reviews which include lesson observation, work sampling, canvassing of staff and student views and analysis of examination performance data
- The development and improvement of learning and teaching as the central component in the school and department improvement planning cycle.
- The use of mechanisms for continuing professional development (courses, coaching, inset, mentoring, training and so on) within the cycle and framework of performance management.

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DAME ALICE OWEN'S SCHOOL

Policy on Assessment, Recording and Reporting of Student Achievement

Introduction:

This policy outlines the school's approach to the measurement of progress and achievement and, through this, provides evidence of effective learning. It also details the recording and reporting of student achievement.

Principles:

Assessment at Dame Alice Owen's School will:

- Support the aims and values of the school
- Support and motivate students' learning by involving students in their own and each other's assessments, by providing meaningful and challenging feedback and by setting clear and measurable targets
- Motivate teachers to achieve school, subject and individual targets
- Measure the progress that students have made
- Diagnose learning problems and student's additional needs
- Monitor standards
- Check teaching objectives against learning outcomes
- Be built into the planning for teaching and learning with adequate curriculum time allowed
- Be based on clear criteria
- Provide useful information to staff, parents, students, employers and Further and higher education
- Be manageable, effective and constructive, and
- Evaluative to inform future planning.

Expected Outcomes:

- Measure progress and provide useful feedback
- A coordinated, easily accessible and well-understood system of assessment is in place within each department and across the school
- All students are given targets and know what they need to know to do to improve
- Parents are informed about their child's progress
- The School Improvement Plan incorporates the results from the assessment process.

Accountabilities and responsibilities:

The Governors and Senior Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring the school meets statutory requirements in relation to assessment and that the school policy for assessment is achieved. They also evaluate the impact of assessment on raising standards within the school by working with staff to devise, monitor, evaluate and review procedures for assessment.

In particular:

- Prepare and publish a timetable of events associated with the assessment cycle
- Lead on development and review of whole school assessment policy
- Identify assessment priorities for the school improvement plan
- Ensure assessment systems are manageable and that assessment data is effectively gathered, collated and used
- Look for equality in assessment across the school within and between Departments, and
- Ensure assessments are fit for purpose and appropriate for the subject.

The Subject Leader is accountable to the Senior Team and responsible for:

- Development of an assessment policy for the subject in line with school Policy
- Ensure schemes of work include clear learning objectives and assessment opportunities to include Afl and diagnostic assessment
- Marking and assessment criteria are clearly explained to students. A copy of each relevant department's marking policy should be displayed in the students' books
- Regular assessment is recorded, shared across the department and student learning is reviewed with appropriate target setting
- Check that assessment and marking procedures are implemented effectively
- Develop consistency across the departments through agreement of standards e.g. through departmental moderation
- Analyse, understand and use departmental data with the subject team to monitor standards and set appropriately challenging targets
- Ensure progress towards targets is regularly monitored.

The Teacher is accountable to the Subject Leader and responsible for carrying out the agreed procedures for assessment.

Provide assessment for learning opportunities within the classroom

- Enable students to develop the skills of self and peer assessment
- Use assessments to identify students in need of support and ensure an appropriate level of challenge for all students
- Use agreed range of assessment methods and techniques to gather and use assessment in line with the department's and school's policies
- Record progress and identify under-achievement
- Report to parents - student progress, attainment, next steps
- Ensure information is available for next teacher or school

The Pastoral Directors, Assistant Head (Pastoral) and Assistant Head (6th Form) are accountable to the Senior Team and responsible for:

- Using assessment data to identify students causing concern. Plan appropriate intervention and monitor progress
- Using assessment data to track student progress, liaising with form tutors, subject teachers and parents as appropriate.

The Form Tutor is accountable to the Pastoral Director and is responsible for:

- Using assessment data to support students in their form; identifying underachievement and monitoring progress.

Assessment in practice

The following methods of assessment have been identified as key to the assessment of and for learning at Dame Alice Owen's.

Curriculum Planning

Departmental schemes of work will:

- take account of the school Teaching and Learning, Numeracy and Literacy policies
- Contain common activities, such as end of topic tests that are planned, implemented and standardised across the department, to be used as a basis for school summative assessment grading
- Show progression and differentiation and indicate expected learning outcomes for different groups of students
- Enable students to know clearly when, and on what criteria, they are being assessed and what they need to do to improve.

Marking

Each department has an agreed policy which includes clear criteria. Where marks, levels or grades are awarded they should relate to criteria that are clearly understood by students. Marking should enable students to understand what they have achieved and how their work can be improved. There is a distinction between preparatory work and that which is formally assessed.

Heads of Department are responsible for regular moderation across the department to provide consistency, including systematic work scrutiny.

Assessment for Learning

Assessment for learning will include self, peer and teacher assessment and it should be included as part of every departmental marking policy. AfL consists of many components, two of which are marking and questioning. Teachers should provide regular feedback to students through rigorous diagnostic marking.

- Homework should have clear success criteria.
- All teacher marked work should be marked alongside the success criteria with successes identified and targets/questions/improvements suggested to allow students to move on to the next level of thinking (not necessarily national curriculum levels).
- Time must be allowed e.g. in a subsequent lesson or for homework for students to read through targets, ask for clarification and (begin to) meet them.
- Each department should identify a minimum of one piece of work per half term that is formally assessed using rigorous diagnostic marking. (based on teaching 1 lesson per week)
- In between such assessments teachers acknowledge students work, including improvements and corrections with smaller targets to meet.
- Other homework can be class/peer or self-assessed.

Teachers must ensure that work is marked and returned to students promptly. Only in exceptional circumstances should this exceed two weeks.

Questioning

A variety of questioning techniques should be used, in particular open questioning which encourages discussion, deeper thinking and deeper learning. Classroom dialogue of various kinds, including whole class, group and paired discussions, has an important part to play in this area.

Record Keeping

Departments will have in place methods which:

- Are agreed across the department
- Can be transferred from one teacher to another
- Provide the basis for evidence about students' achievements and for future planning.
- Can be easily interpreted by Pastoral Directors or SLT

Non - academic achievements are recorded by Pastoral Directors and Form Tutors and stored on the School Management System.

Reporting to parents

Key Stage 3

During Key Stage 3 all students receive an interim report and a full report each year. In Year 7 every student is also given an Expected Progress Level (EPL). In years 8 and 9 every student is also given a projected end of key stage level based on objective data from CATs (Cognitive Ability Tests). Their progress is monitored and assessed against the EPL/target level throughout the three year period. The move towards EPL across key stage 3 will be in place from September 2017. They are also awarded grades based on agreed criteria using a five point scale for behaviour, effort, organisation and meeting deadlines, and focus and commitment to learning. The full reports provide detailed comments about achievements and progress alongside clear targets for improvement.

Key Stage 4

In Key Stage 4 students receive a target grade in each subject generated from a bespoke combination of their CATs scores. Throughout Key Stage 4 progress is monitored against their target grade and a likely grade based on current performance is reported on their interim reports. Consistent with Key Stage 3 there is a similar system of reporting.. A number of students receive individual mentoring by a member of staff who monitors progress, helps maintain confidence and work rate and provides detailed feedback from other teachers across the range of subjects being studied.

Key Stage 5

At Key Stage 5 there is once again a system of Target Grades based on GCSE results. Progress is monitored and a likely grade based on current performance is reported through the Interim Reports. There is regular support from Form Tutors In addition to reports sent home for parents, there is a yes/no progress check at an appropriate time in each academic year for students in key stage 3, year 10 and year 12.

Promoting and evaluating the policy

Within school this policy will be monitored and kept under regular review by the SLT. Pam Perrett has a specific role in the strategic leadership of assessment.

Success will be judged through:

- Formalised in-school review of assessment policy and practice to identify priorities for school improvement plan
- A published assessment and reporting calendar for the year
- Existence of targets for all students
- Measurement of actual and against student results, notably at KS3, 4 and 5
- Measurement of value-added per student.

To be monitored by Dr Matt James, Curriculum Director, and Pam Perrett Assistant Head, Assessment.

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