



STOUR VALLEY
COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Teaching and Learning Policy

“We aim to open students’ minds to their full potential so that when they leave us, they have a firm foundation on which to build the next phase of their lives, whether that is in further academic study, vocational training or the world of work. We want our students to be happy and confident, but also caring and tolerant. Above all we want them to have a thirst for knowledge and a real enthusiasm for life.”

Learning is at the centre of everything we do. We strive for continued excellence and for a culture of lifelong learning, of the highest quality, for both our students and staff. We believe that **quality teaching makes *the* difference to our students.**

Purpose

To develop the consistency and impact of day-to-day teaching on pupil learning and progress.

Outline expectations so that they are simple, clear and manageable for all teachers.

Support the development of pedagogy as highlighted under, ‘Quality of Teaching and Staff Development’ in our School Development Plan:

Responsibilities

- It is the responsibility of all teachers to provide the highest quality teaching and feedback for our students.
- It is the responsibility of teachers with Teaching and Learning Responsibilities to monitor the quality of the teaching and learning within their department/faculty and to offer support and development where needed. Heads of Faculty have a designated SLT line manager who can support and advise as appropriate.
- The significance of the role of students and parents in the partnership for learning cannot be over-emphasised. Students are not only encouraged, but taught how to take responsibility for their learning.

1. Planning

All subject areas will use schemes of learning to structure content and delivery. Each scheme will;

- Identify prior learning to ensure clear progression.
- Identify clearly the subject knowledge, skills and understanding which will be taught.
- Include suggested learning activities that can be adapted by teachers to suit their teaching style and appropriate to the learners they teach.
- Include references to adapted strategies to ensure all students are challenged in line with their ability. Provide opportunities for developing independent and collaborative learning.
- Detail how the unit will be assessed in line with the school’s assessment timetable. These assessments should demonstrate transition from one key stage into the next.

From a scheme of learning staff should ensure they plan individual lessons and sequences of lessons. This will include:

- **Learning objectives:** Every lesson must have challenging (pitch to the top, support below) achievable learning objectives that are clear and precise about what you want students to **learn** and *not* what you want them to do: 'learning focused not task focused'. Students should be clear through the school's objective of 'What does success look like today?' question.
- **Planning** to ensure that students are constantly challenged to develop new learning, contribute within lessons, demonstrate their learning independently and also review and evaluate their learning. Different aspects might be approached within one lesson or across different lessons as appropriate.
- **Seating for progress:** Seating plans to account for the profile of all teaching groups and be used as an effective teaching tool to aid adaptive teaching and progress of all students within the group.

2. TEACHING- BASIC EXPECTATIONS

All teachers are expected wherever possible to implement the STOUR VALLEY 5 to ensure that the routines for effective learning are in place.



STOUR VALLEY 5

What does success look like today?



1. Students line up in single file outside the room (where practical and safe to do so)
2. Teachers greet/welcome students at the door and check standards
3. Students enter calmly and get equipment out and place on the desk
4. Teacher sets an engagement activity to start all lessons (question/image/problem/learning hook)
5. At the end of the lesson teacher checks uniform and teacher dismisses from the door

In addition, lessons should enthuse and engage students and should demonstrate:

- Strategies, tasks and delivery should enthuse students so that they persevere when faced with difficult problems and are keen to succeed and to learn more.
- Pace and depth of learning - The pace of learning should be optimised throughout the lesson as to the best effect to support students at the time they need such support. This will support students in making good or better progress.

- Modelling – Should be used on a regular basis to demonstrate to students how to structure their thinking.
- Retrieval - Questions should be designed to tease out students' understanding so that the teacher can assess where a pupil is and what next steps might be. All teachers should employ a range of questioning techniques across their lessons. Low stakes assessments should be used to check students understanding of previously studied subject matter.
- Oracy – The opportunity for high quality discussion and for students to articulate their learning should be explored wherever possible.
- Literacy – Students are given the opportunity to explore high quality, challenging texts which develops vocabulary.
- High quality adaptive teaching which supports and challenges the needs of all learners.

3. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

“Fortunately, teachers have access to the best professional learning resource there is: other teachers. And through a lens focused on change from the inside out, starting with practices that teachers themselves have identified as important for advancing student learning, teachers can help one another develop skills to more precisely meet the needs of their students.

A team of classroom teachers committed to helping each other improve.” Kristen Rouleau, 2019

All staff receive planned professional development through the school's professional development calendar. Professional development is directed towards the schools foci as outlined in the Development plan. Professional development will be delivered by senior staff as well as utilising the expertise from within the staff body. Some of this professional development will be disaggregated through Departmental Meetings and Heads of Faculty and Departments will lead on providing subject specific development.

In addition, staff will receive support from expert external speakers and guests who are able to support the staff to develop their practice. All staff have the opportunity to request access to external courses to supplement their understanding of Teaching and Learning.

The school utilises the 'Walkthru programme' to provide whole staff and bespoke support to individual members of staff.

4. MONITORING TEACHING, LEARNING, ASSESSMENT, MARKING and FEEDBACK

- At Stour Valley, we want all of our teachers to be reflective practitioners who benefit from drop-ins. Drop-ins should always be positive experiences where the feedback is developmental and formative rather than judgemental and summative. Drop-ins are no more than 15-20 minutes.
- **'Drop-ins'**- Three times a year, according to the monitoring schedule (see page 6), middle leaders will carry out drop-ins to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their faculty/department. The focus of these is at the discretion of the middle leader and may link

to Departmental Development Plans/ School Development Plan. Throughout the year senior and middle leaders will drop into lessons to gauge the quality of the learning environment. These drop-ins may be useful to identify trends following CPD or a particular focus on pedagogy (questioning, independence, behaviour for learning).

- Teachers will be observed once a year for a longer duration as part of the Performance Management cycle. All staff are set targets linked to the School Development Plan as well as their own developmental needs.
- **Pupil Book Study**- This takes place on 2 occasions over the course of the academic year. A variety of students are invited to discuss their learning using their books as evidence. This can be led by a Senior leader, Head of Faculty/Department or by the subject teacher themselves. Assessment/feedback will be reviewed regularly so that areas of strength can be shared and areas for development identified. The focus is always quality of feedback, marking and assessment, as well as student response. There is no expectation of a prescriptive frequency or specific form of feedback. Each individual department/faculty have identified how feedback takes place in their 'Feedback Loop.'
- **Data Review**- Following each assessment cycle, senior and middle leaders will review, and quality assure data presented in fortnightly Line Management meetings. Departmental practice will also include regular moderation of samples of assessments within departments. This will further support accurate, effective assessment and reporting.
- **Pupil voice**- This enables us to evaluate the effectiveness of our practice across the school and captures an understanding of student experiences. This process is useful in informing developments and helping the school to continuously improve. A selection of students are invited to feedback on their learning experience. This will include opportunities for small group feedback to middle leaders as per the monitoring schedule.
- **Parent voice**- Parents play an active role in supporting teaching and learning within the school. There are a number of ways in which parents are encouraged to keep the lines of communication open between home and school:
 - Our parents' consultation evenings provide parents with an opportunity to request appointments with their child's teachers.
 - Information evenings are generally well attended by parents. These take place at critical times to support, for example, curriculum choices.
 - Parental surveys, often conducted at events outlined above, help us to capture feedback on such topics as the effectiveness of our reports and how they might be improved.
 - Parents are asked to complete a survey linked to the relevant subject for the 'Subject Review' process and formulate an integral part of the report.
- **Staff feedback**- Just as we encourage students to self-reflect and identify areas for further development, we invite staff to do the same. Following attendance of CPD events, staff are asked to complete an evaluation to establish the effectiveness of the course as well as where key information can be shared, whether within departments or whole school. The Deputy Headteacher in charge of Teaching of Learning collates all of these and incorporates them into to CPD calendar where appropriate.

- **Subject Reviews** – These are held annually and combine all of the elements of quality assurance previously listed. They are a way of monitoring the ongoing development of each department area.

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MIDDLE LEADER MONITORING

Over the academic year, Middle Leaders are expected to carry out monitoring of their departments, to ensure high quality teaching and learning (of all students), consistency and to be able to trace where that particular class/ lesson fits into the curriculum map for that subject.

All monitoring is to be completed using the online form. Heads of Faculty/Department will then feedback in Line Management meetings with SLT as an overview.

'Teach to the Top and Scaffold Up'

Routines will be based on Stour Valley 5	Key strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modelling • Retrieval • Literacy/Oracy (Tier2/3 Vocabulary)
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HALF TERM 1	Subject Learning Climate Walks	Is the planned curriculum being delivered? Are key priorities being focussed on? Subject not individual focus	HODS with SLT support
HALF TERM 2	Pupil Book Study	KS3/4 Focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has the learning been adapted? • Feedback & Assessment – Does the student know how to improve? 	HODS with SLT support
HALF TERM 3	Lesson Drop Ins Agreed lesson	25 min focus on key question & evidence of strategies being implemented.	HODS for teaching staff. SLT for HODS
HALF TERM 4	Pupil Voice	<i>What are the learning experiences for learners in that subject?</i>	HODS
HALF TERM 5	Lesson Drop Ins Agreed lesson	25 min focus on key question & evidence of strategies being implemented.	HODS for teaching staff. SLT for HODS
HALF TERM 6	Pupil Book Study	KS3/4 Focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has the learning been adapted? • Feedback & Assessment – Does the student know how to improve? 	HODS with SLT support

Ratified by Governing Body	SVCS LGB
Date	December 2025