



King Edward VII *Academy*

## **Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Curriculum Policy**

### ***Including Literacy***

December 2015

Author: Craig Morrison, Principal

### **Ethos**

As KES became an academy in September 2014, a new vision and set of values were explored with a range of stakeholders, including a new mission statement – **Learning Together, Achieving Together**.

Teaching and learning is intrinsic to all of our work, as exemplified in this statement.

**Learning** – learning is at the centre of our work and encompasses a whole range of different outcomes, many measurable, some less easily so, ranging from academic success to gaining a deep understanding of moral issues.

**Achieving** – learning must be focused upon achievement first and foremost in our work. Wider learning, beyond examination requirements, is of course crucial to developing well rounded individuals, yet our primary focus is on preparing young people to be successful and our best way of doing this is to enable them to make significant progress and gain the results which will be the 'passport' to further success.

**Teaching** – skilful teaching is the servant of learning and achievement. Without learning and then achievement, teaching exists in a vacuum. It is also highly unlikely that learning and achievement will take place without skilful teaching, from the very best of inspiring input and questioning to the development of students' independence as learners and the wisdom of 'getting out of the way' of students own thinking as they grow in confidence.

**Curriculum** – the curriculum is the set or continuum of learning experiences which acts as the vehicle for learning and achievement. If the curriculum does not support these ends, then it is no longer fit for purpose. The curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities must also promote **enjoyment**. Enjoyment and engagement are key to our approach as we wish all of our students to not just learn and achieve but then to wish to continue to do so and to progress to further study.

**Assessment** – assessment activities are our means as both teachers and students of gauging our learning and achievement and if designed with engagement in mind contribute enormously to a student's sense of enjoyment. Assessment is reliant upon feedback and acting upon this feedback in a cycle of continuous and fluid improvement.

**Togetherness** – a core strand of our new approach as KES Academy is to focus upon working together. Our work to learn and to achieve to the best of our ability is far more productive when



King Edward VII *Academy*

conducted in a partnership, with students, staff and families all pulling in the same direction to create a healthy, safe and successful learning environment, with a strong core of mutual support.

## Developing teaching and learning policy and practice

This is an interim policy designed to explain our priorities and broad approach to teaching, learning and the curriculum. In the spirit of **togetherness**, we wish to develop our approach as a team of staff and students over the next twelve months for the policy to be meaningful.

Teaching and learning is developed at KES through a range of professional development activities, such as breakfast training in mixed or department groups, 'Excellence Within' masterclasses and whole staff training events. Tailored CPD groups target particular groups of teachers to secure improvements in their practice. For the academic year 2014/5 these are:

- NQTs and new staff
- The outstanding practitioner
- Emerging to outstanding
- Advanced teaching skills
- Collaborative practitioners

Successful approaches seen at work in the academy and shared through training opportunities such as those described above are detailed in the **teaching and learning handbook**. This handbook is a key document for teaching staff and illustrates an ever evolving set of strategies to use with classes. Where observation of teachers leads us to see gaps in the quality of what we are doing, training opportunities and the handbook will be altered to address such gaps.

Our teaching, learning and curriculum policy both now and in its future form will not seek to be prescriptive about any set way of planning or delivering individual lessons. Whilst there are formats for the planning of longer units of work and for the formal observation of individual lessons, there is a recognition that skilful teachers who produce the best outcomes are those who enjoy a high level of professional trust to choose the appropriate formats and strategies to generate success.

As such, the curriculum and the teaching strategies used to deliver it must be **fit for purpose**, as in they must be personalised to meeting the learning and achievement needs of the students in each class, including their need to enjoy their learning and fully participate.

In addition, enjoyment and participation is engendered when students experience a range of different teaching and learning styles and experiences within each working day and over longer periods. We therefore do not insist upon set three or four part lesson structures or the sharing of lesson objectives at a set time each lesson as we believe that this can quickly create a standardised and ultimately frustrating learning experience.

**Learning Together, Achieving Together** is based upon a fit for purpose model of teaching and learning.



King Edward VII *Academy*

## **Personalisation and equal opportunities**

Whilst we do not insist upon set structures, formats and strategies, our approach does have distinct characteristics which are aimed at establishing our ethos throughout what we do. A key part of this is that everyone has an equal right to prosper in their learning and that we aim to foster this through an inclusive approach.

By personalising the curriculum in its broadest sense through qualifications and pathways, through to our individual lesson planning and teaching delivery, we will aim to meet the individual needs and aspirations of our students. We will aim to overcome barriers to learning and eliminate prejudice so that all can succeed.

We will insist upon students with additional learning needs, disabilities and gifts and talents receiving appropriate attention and differentiated teaching and activities and resources to assist them in making the most of their potential – please see our SEND policy and our Able, Gifted and Talented Policy for further information.

We also insist that students are not discriminated against in their learning environment due to their race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion or ethnicity – please see our Single Equality Scheme for further information.

There is a particular focus upon our power as teachers to tackle the effects of disadvantage upon student aspiration and achievement. By identifying students who may suffer from disadvantage, carefully encouraging and praising their efforts, using the additional resources, mentoring and intervention available via the Pupil Premium funds and having high expectations of them at all times, we aim to make a real difference – please see our Pupil Premium Statement for more information on our approach.

The curriculum has a key role to play in building in learning experiences that challenge prejudice and promote tolerance and equal opportunities. All teachers and departments have a responsibility to promote equal opportunity and individual dignity.

## **Classroom expectations and roles**

**The Principal and Head of School will work with the Academy Leadership Team to:**

- Create and maintain an environment and code of behaviour which promote and secure good teaching, effective learning, high standards of achievement and good behaviour and discipline.
- Determine, organise and implement a full, broad and balanced curriculum.
- Ensure cross curricular strategies for Literacy, Numeracy, ICT, Maths and Enterprise are applied consistently and impact on raising achievement.
- Ensure that effective and appropriate support is available and planned for all students.



### King Edward VII *Academy*

- Involve all staff in the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning and achievement of all students, including those with additional needs.
- Promote positive strategies which encourage respect for all members of the Academy community.
- Develop links with the community, including business and industry in order to extend the curriculum, deliver highly innovative enterprise initiatives, and to enhance the learning and teaching.
- Create and maintain an effective partnership with parents and carers to support and improve student's achievement, personal development and well-being.
- Ensure regular celebration of student achievement – sporting, cultural and academic.

### **Expectations of Classroom Teachers:**

- Plan effectively and deliver lessons appropriate to every individual within the teaching group, ensuring support and challenge as appropriate.
- Monitor students' progress through frequent formal and informal written and oral feedback and maintain effective records.
- Create a secure, stimulating and enterprising classroom climate that will motivate students to learn and to perform to the best of their ability.
- Support students in their learning and help them to become confident independent learners.
- Provide opportunities for students to assess their own and others' work in accordance with a clear criterion.
- Ensure all students are aware of current attainment level and know how to achieve target level.
- Use ICT selectively and appropriately to enhance the teaching process, increase student ICT capability and motivate students towards developing a positive attitude to their learning, thus enabling them to take more responsibility for their own learning.
- Ensure that lesson planning, assessment information, IEPs, profile of need, seating plan and any other documentation about each class is well organised kept securely. These must be regularly reviewed and shared within departments.
- Follow whole academy Behaviour, Rewards and Assessment Policies rigorously.

#### **Learning Environment**

- Ensure that there is a positive learning environment characterised by high teacher and learner expectations.
- Ensure that there are high quality displays in the classroom that reinforce expectations.
- Display exemplar work together with levels and assessment criteria.
- Make sure the classroom is well organised and tidy.
- Academy rewards and sanctions will be on display.

#### **At the Start of a Lesson**

- The teacher must be outside the door to welcome the students into the room in an orderly fashion.
- Students should be in the correct uniform, and ready to learn.



King Edward VII *Academy*

- Please ensure that all head phones are put away unless you have specifically designed your lesson to include them. Mobile telephones should only be used at the teacher's discretion.
- Students must only have equipment for the lesson on the desk.
- A register must be taken for each lesson.
- Engage students' interest with a warm up or starter activity.
- Homework should be set with enough time for explanation and copying down.

#### **Put the Learning into Context**

- The lesson should use time well and be structured with appropriate pace and challenge.
- Learning objectives and outcomes should be shared with the students, ideally linked to student levels.
- A balance should be achieved between whole class interactive, class teaching, individual work, group work, testing and assessment.
- A range of learning styles should be accounted for.
- Praise should be used, wherever possible, for achievement and effort.
- Build enjoyment into a lesson; let your love for your subject and your enjoyment of learning show through and use the enthusiasm of students.

#### **Reward Appropriately**

- Our Behaviour & Reward Strategy needs to both manage and motivate our students.
- Whenever staff have the opportunity to praise and encourage, they must do so.
- Reward students accordingly using our Vivo system.

#### **At the end of the lesson**

- A review of what students have learnt should take place, though this could take a variety of forms.
- Check learning against outcomes shared at the beginning of the lesson.
- Allow time for questions and thoughtful answers.
- Give praise to the class as a whole or individuals for their learning.
- Establish an orderly end to the lesson before students are dismissed.

#### **Behaviour Management**

- Students must see that if they disrupt learning there will be a consequence.
- Follow the stages of the behaviour management policy displayed on the classroom wall, pointing out to the student which stage they are at. Where at all possible do not jump stages.
- Where a student settles make sure praise is given for their work as soon as is practically possible.
- Be prepared to follow-up any poor behaviour in your lesson, with a meeting and/or sanction. It is very important to ensure there is a conclusion with the member of staff concerned, although line managers may be required to support in this.
- If a student is temporarily removed from your lesson you remain responsible for that student's learning. You must ensure that the student is set appropriate work and that this work is marked alongside other students in the group. Teachers must also follow-up poor behaviour with an appropriate sanction.



#### King Edward VII *Academy*

- Use positive recognition as often as possible and foster participation through sensitive and productive handling of students' mistakes as this will boost self-esteem.
- Always be calm and courteous; this will foster mutual respect and it is more difficult for a student to justify his/her rudeness if you are always polite.

#### **Support Staff:**

- Work collaboratively with the class teacher in planning for learning and teaching.
- Support students in specific aspects of their learning as agreed with the class teacher.

#### **Students:**

- Aim to achieve goals and meet targets and respect the right of others to do the same.
- Take responsibility for their own learning and be proactive in using self-assessment techniques.
- Meet deadlines for completing work.
- Prepare appropriately for each lesson and maintain high expectations of themselves.
- Follow the **"Home Academy Agreement"** and observe the Academy rules.

#### **Parents and Carers:**

- Work in partnership with the Academy in all aspects of their children's education.
- Support Academy initiatives which involve collaborative working to raise student achievement.
- Encourage and support their child to work to meet their potential.
- Attend consultative evenings or meetings to discuss student progress.

#### **Heads of Department:**

- Implement the programme for monitoring and evaluation within their department.
- Be accountable for the standards of learning and teaching within their department.
- Lead the department by example and set high standards.
- Participate in appropriate CPD and disseminate information to staff efficiently, effectively and promptly.
- Support professional development activities within the department.
- Ensure assessment procedures provide information to inform future planning and intervention.
- Set priorities and targets for the department within the context of the school improvement plan.
- Have a clear overview of the department and have in place long, medium and short term plans which will provide a sound basis for the assessment of students and the evaluation of learning and teaching within the subject area.
- To have in place clearly differentiated long, medium and short term schemes of work.



King Edward VII *Academy*

## **The use of Assessment**

At its best, assessment should be part of the fabric of a student's experience in any class; it should never be a bolt-on activity, as it should inform future learning and improvement of work, with students encouraged to look at how well they are doing and what they can do better.

### **Assessment FOR Learning**

#### **Teachers should:**

- Plan and use a whole variety of assessment techniques every day.
- Have clear learning outcomes (written up) and share these with students at the beginning of the lesson.
- Review learning outcomes at the end of the lesson through a plenary.
- Display levels on classroom walls.
- Share assessment criteria with students so that they know how their work will be assessed and how to move from one level to another.
- Provide exemplar material that has been marked using the assessment criteria.
- Ask open questions and give students time to think before getting an answer.
- Use questions to explore students' understanding and diagnose any misconceptions.
- Use a range of strategies for peer and self-assessment.
- Identify specific ways in which students can improve their work.
- Inform students what they have done well and what they need to improve during or soon after the activity.
- Adjust lesson plans to take account of progress.

### **Assessment OF Learning**

#### **Teachers should:**

- Record, track and discuss student progress with individuals.
- Heads of Departments analyse assessment and test results to see the effects of previous strategies.
- Developments/initiatives and to identify any necessary revisions of medium term plans.
- Analysis of data to identify improvement strategies.
- Mark students work (minimum fortnightly) with appropriate positive and specific comments as well as clear targets for improvement; use the whole school marking policy and ensure literacy is taken into account where appropriate.

## **Literacy**

Our students must have the skills to understand, decode and create a range of texts in order to access the curriculum and make expected progress.

Literacy teaching encourages children to become literate - that is, helping children:

- . to become fluent in the use of written and spoken English;
- . to be able to suit their language to different audiences, contexts and purposes;
- . and to become confident and able readers for both information and pleasure.



King Edward VII Academy

*6.1: Teachers should develop pupils' spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for pupils, understanding the language provides access to the whole curriculum. Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects. (The National Curriculum: July 2014)*

### **Literacy - Rationale**

At King Edward VII Academy we hold the belief that literacy is central to all education and aim to develop students' use of language. We believe that literacy allows people to use language to enhance their capacity to think, create and question, which enables them to become more aware of the world and empowers them to participate more effectively in society.

The Academy also sees literacy as the key to improving learning, raising standards and developing an approach that is relevant to all curriculum areas and students of all levels of attainment.

Literacy is a vital skill for life and lifelong learning and **all teachers** and **teaching assistants** are responsible for developing literacy skills.

### **Literacy - Aims**

- . To raise self-esteem and achievement by developing students' literacy skills, with particular attention to the quality, accuracy and structure of their writing.
- . To develop students' language skills, written and spoken, which are the primary means of communication in all learning and teaching.
- . To integrate the development of listening, speaking, reading, writing and critical thinking skills across the curriculum.
- . To develop a culture that enables a speaker, writer or reader to recognise and use appropriate language according to different social situations.

### **Literacy Principles**

Students talk, listen, read and write as part of a learning experience across the curriculum.

Consequently, learning and teaching strategies in **all subjects** should contribute in a consistent and coherent way to the students' literacy development.

The Academy is constantly working to:

- . develop a shared understanding of the relationship between language and learning;
- . develop a basic understanding amongst all staff of the processes of reading and writing;
- . develop effective teaching strategies across the curriculum which facilitate literacy;
- . develop and enable all students to achieve their learning potential;
- . ensure that literacy work has a high status in the school and is viewed positively;
- . set realistic targets for improvement;
- . develop an intervention programme to support students who have less developed literacy skills;
- . and establish a common mechanism for monitoring and evaluating the positive impact of the Academy's literacy strategy on students' literacy skills.

**A KES Literacy Action Plan will be in place to pursue the above aims and this will be updated annually in order to focus upon areas of need.**





King Edward VII *Academy*

### **Literacy skills**

We recognise that reading, writing, speaking and listening are interrelated processes. Nevertheless, where appropriate, we will make the specific skills we are focusing on explicit to students.

As a **staff**, we will aim to develop students' **writing** skills by:

- . giving them opportunities to write for a range of purposes in a variety of forms and, where possible, giving them opportunities to write for real audiences;
- . making connections between reading and writing so that they have clear models for writing;
- . making explicit in our teaching text level, sentence level and word level features of texts;
- . creating opportunities for students to plan, draft and evaluate their writing where appropriate;
- . encouraging them to structure their writing using sentences, paragraphs and headings;
- . and adhering to a common policy on marking spelling, punctuation and grammar.

As a **staff**, we will aim to develop students' **reading** skills by:

- . ensuring that the Reading Age of all text books and worksheets are appropriate;
- . displaying key words in classrooms and using a range of strategies to reinforce accurate spelling of these;
- . encouraging students to keep and maintain personal glossaries;
- . actively promoting the use of dictionaries by students in all classrooms;
- . explicitly teaching active reading strategies;
- . and providing more challenging books, magazines and electronic resources as extension work for the more able.

As a **staff**, we will aim to develop students' **speaking and listening** skills by:

- . giving students opportunities to read text out loud to increase understanding, fluency and confidence;
- . using questioning to support and challenge students developing their own responses;
- . explicitly teaching students how to listen and modelling how to speak in different contexts;
- . incorporating in our lessons a range of situations and groupings where Speaking and Listening skills can be practised and where talk itself is valued;
- . encouraging students to explain their ideas to others;
- . and by giving students feedback on their strengths and weaknesses in this area and giving them opportunities to evaluate their own performance.

### **Expectations of students**

Students should take responsibility for their own learning and are expected to:

- . write in full sentences at all times unless explicitly instructed to make notes;
- . present all work neatly, taking care with their handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar;
- . proof-read their work to check for accuracy prior to submitting it;
- . make corrections when requested to do so;
- . work independently or with appropriate support on any literacy targets they may have;
- . respond appropriately to comments made by teachers on the Wow How Now Stickers



King Edward VII Academy

### **Role of Parents**

The role of parents in raising literacy amongst students is a crucial one. The Academy is committed to the development of home-school partnerships.

As part of this partnership, we aim to:

- . keep parents informed about literacy initiatives within the school
- . value parents' contributions, both formal and informal;
- . keep parents informed of student assessment and progress;
- . explain to parents the curriculum and other related issues;
- . invite parents to appropriate meetings;
- . and encourage reading for pleasure at home.

### **Enrichment**

Students are offered a wide range of opportunities to participate in activities which are likely to enhance their development of key literacy skills. These include, but are not limited to:

- . introducing them to the library in year 7;
- . shadowing national and regional book awards;
- . debating clubs;
- . homework club;
- . entering school, local and national writing competitions;
- . spelling bees;
- . whole school promotion of literacy events

### **Marking for literacy**

To support whole school literacy strategies, consistent abbreviations/symbols should be used by all departments.

See *KES Marking Policy* and *KES Teaching and Learning Handbook* for further details.

### **Spelling**

Spelling is often an area of concern for parents. Accuracy is required in all subject areas. Students should be encouraged to take responsibility for developing their skills in this area. To support their learning, a consistent approach should be used by all departments as distributed annually.

### **Monitoring literacy**

The impact of the literacy action plan will be monitored using a variety of methods, including:

- scrutiny of examination results;
- APS;
- Reading and Spelling Ages
- work scrutinies which focus on progression in literacy;
- student voice;
- Literacy Co-ordinator review.



King Edward VII *Academy*

## **The curriculum – fit for purpose and balanced**

As with our teaching and learning and assessment approach, the curriculum must be **fit for purpose**, supporting the learning and achievement of each individual. Therefore, much as with each single lesson, the longer term curriculum and wherever possible the extra-curricular dimension should be personalised to the needs and ambitions of individuals.

A key part of our approach to creating a **personalised curriculum** is to offer sufficient breadth and balance to the offer, particularly when students move from a broader foundation of learning at Key Stage 3 to choices of subject at Key Stage 4 and Post-16.

Wherever possible, we **avoid streaming the curriculum**, so that students may choose from the full range of subjects. Students may well be in ability sets within each subject, but we aim for them to be in the appropriate set per subject rather than in blocks of subjects.

We aim to prioritise a range of qualifications to **ensure breadth**, spanning the different disciplines of learning with a commitment to arts, sports and technologies which go beyond the confines of the English Baccalaureate subjects. We also promote a range of learning types and experiences, providing access to **vocational and practical** learning.

In line with the traditions of the academy, we offer a range of challenging **academic courses** some of which are not routinely offered in schools: a range of languages, Latin, Classics, Ancient History, Philosophy and Ethics. We offer advanced level and extension courses such as Further Maths within the 6<sup>th</sup> form.

We focus upon **depth** in the curriculum, to ensure that fundamental questions about people and society are asked and that there are opportunities to explore the **social, moral, spiritual and cultural** dimension.

The **relevance** of the curriculum is also crucial to our young people, not only so that they are engaged but to prepare them to be ready for the wider world. We seek to use contemporary situations and examples in our work and to promote and teach the importance of tolerance and free speech, the dangers of radical views and actions and the importance of **modern British values** in upholding a fair, equitable and safe society. This focus upon **citizenship** is bolstered by a focus on democracy, community action and engagement in current issues of importance through the work of the Humanities faculty. We also provide relevant learning through an approach to **personal, social and health education** which is age appropriate and involves a mixture of internal staff and expert speakers in promoting safe and respectful living, linked to sex education (see separate policy), substance use and abuse, families, relationships, personal safety, anti-bullying (see separate policy), driver education, avoiding crime and anti-social behaviour, rights and responsibilities. These topics are taught in subject departments in distinct units or in set days (curriculum days).



King Edward VII *Academy*

## **Appendix 1**

### **Teaching and Learning Checklist**

The following checklist is helpful in encouraging teachers to reflect upon the quality of what they are doing. This checklist was developed by Ofsted for a previous inspection framework but it remains one of the best guides to how we can reflect on the quality of student learning as a result of our teaching.

#### **Questioning Strategies**

- Does the teacher use open ended questions?
- Are students required to justify their answers?
- Does the teacher encourage thinking time?
- Are all students engaged in the question and answer process?

#### **Interactions with Students**

- Are interventions / interactions mostly concerned with improving understanding rather than classroom management?
- Does the teacher intervene to encourage depth, breadth and detail?
- Do interactions with students give a clear message of high expectations for all students?

#### **Target Setting**

- Are clear quality targets set and followed up?
- Are the characteristics of a high quality piece of work shared with the students?
- Do marking and feedback routines regularly set targets for future improvement and achievement?
- Do students have the opportunity to set his / her own or others' targets for improvement?

#### **Pace**

- Are time targets given to students?
- Are time targets pursued without compromising depth of student response?
- Are lessons structured to provide motivational goals and encourage students to work with pace?

#### **High and Low Order Tasks**

- Does the lesson contain a variety of learning activities?
- Does the lesson include an appropriate balance of high and low order activities?
- Does the structure of the lesson ensure that lower attaining students access some high order activities?



King Edward VII *Academy*

### **Differentiation**

- Is prior knowledge of students used to plan the different kinds of work?
- Is baseline data used to help with planning?
- Is planning linked to targets in IEPs, are the suggested strategies for support being planned for e.g. writing frames, size of font, peer coaching?
- Are strategies used to ensure most able students are extended by tackling different types of work rather than just more of the same?

### **Problem Solving**

- Do the activities set involve the use of a range of resources, including more demanding source material?
- Has the teacher created a climate in which students are expected to solve problems for themselves rather than rely on the teacher?

### **SMSC**

- Does the teacher make the Social, Moral, Cultural and Spiritual dimension of the lesson apparent to students? <http://www.opeus.org/smsc/>

### **Expectations**

- Does the teacher clearly signal high expectations to students?
- Are the students expected to perform to their individual best level or only to the level of those around them?

### **Homework**

- Is homework sufficiently demanding, varied and motivating, and related to the work in progress?
- Is homework marked promptly and regularly?
- Is homework placed in 'Show My Homework'?

### **Behaviour Management**

- Is there consistent application of Academy policy on rewards, rules and sanctions?
- Are students praised for their effort and achievement?
- Are all students treated fairly?

### **Research web-sites relating to Teaching & Learning**

The staff journal can be used to share brief items on teaching & learning and professional development. You will find several useful articles and teaching tips in Staff Share/Staff Public/Learning and Teaching/Articles and Advice for T&L.

The following links have proved useful:

[www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk) (DFE site dedicated to improving practice and CPD)

[www.bera.ac.uk](http://www.bera.ac.uk) (British Educational Research Association)

[www.gatsby.org.uk](http://www.gatsby.org.uk) (Gatsby charitable foundation)



King Edward VII *Academy*

<http://www.nationalcollege.org.uk/> (National College for Teaching and Leadership)

[www.nfer.ac.uk](http://www.nfer.ac.uk) (National Federation for Educational Research)

[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk) (Inspection information)

[www.ssatrust.org.uk](http://www.ssatrust.org.uk) (Specialist Schools Trust)

[www.tes.co.uk](http://www.tes.co.uk) (Times Educational Supplement)

<http://www.philbeadle.com/> (Video clips and articles from an exceptional teacher and trainer  
Phil Beadle)