

Oakdale Comprehensive School

Ysgol Gyfun Oakdale



Teaching & Learning
Policy

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is

To create a happy and productive community of learners in which **all are valued**:

- staff and pupils sustain high levels of confidence and self-esteem.
- staff and pupils achieve and where that achievement is given recognition.
- staff and pupils support and help each other in a spirit of mutual regard and dignity.
- pupils are encouraged to develop into responsible citizens and contribute successfully to a free, democratic society.

ETHOS

WE ASK ALL MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

- to give of their best always.
- to engage and participate in as wide a range of activities as possible.
- to treat others as they themselves would wish to be treated.

WE ARE PREPARING OUR YOUNG PEOPLE SO THAT THEY

Have the skills to achieve their full potential:-

- Academically.
- In the world of work.
- In physical and cultural activity.
- As social and political beings.
- Have the confidence, self-belief, flexibility and vision to create lives of quality for themselves and their communities.

Teaching and Learning

Why Have A Policy?

What is the main aim of our T&L policy?

- To create a clear lesson structure for all staff to follow
- To give the pupils consistency across the curriculum, thus improving both the behaviour management and learning ethos of the school
- To increase the awareness amongst staff and pupils of the need to vary our teaching style to suit the different learning needs
- A future aim will be to ensure the pupils take full responsibility for their own learning

How will we achieve this?

By

- developing a T&L policy
- adopting a whole school approach to T&L
- increasing awareness across the school
- producing a T&L good practice booklet
- giving the OCS staff ownership of the policy
- sharing our aims and ideas with the pupils

What would we like by the time pupils leave at the end of year 11?

- Pupils know how to learn (and become more responsible for their own learning)
- Pupils are comfortable with - and aware of - their preferred learning styles
- Improved exam results at KS4

How will we achieve this?

- More interesting lessons
- Pupils take responsibility for their own learning
- More structured lessons
- All staff are aware of and implement the T&L ideas

The best way to achieve these outcomes is to implement a common lesson structure across the school which addresses the aims stated above.

This will result in more focused pupils which would reduce discipline issues and optimise pupils' learning.

This will be achieved as:

- Pupils will feel more secure and therefore be more confident learners
- Less low level disruption (a direct result of more consistency across the school) would enable pupils to achieve more
- Pupils' concentration levels will be improved
- Pupils will be challenged through the different learning styles
- Pupils will feel a greater sense of achievement
- Overall achievement/standards will be raised
- Various learning styles will be addressed
- Pupils will be empowered as learners

Benefits for staff

- Staff also know what is expected
- Consistent lesson observations
- Less disruption in lesson/ fewer challenges from pupils regarding behaviour
- Better relationships with pupils
- Greater job satisfaction

Working party needs to produce the following documentation:

- Poster for staff outlining a common lesson approach
- Simplified version of poster for pupils
- Good practice booklets exemplifying ideas

Teaching & Learning Policy

ETHOS

Teaching and Learning is the main aim of the school. Teachers have a duty to provide and pupil an entitlement to receive the best professional tuition irrespective of gender, religion, ethnicity or ability. It is essential that there is a commonality of approach by all the school community in the way in which learning operates.

Aims

- To provide a high quality education, which is accessible to everyone in our learning community.
- To develop independent, enthusiastic responsibility life long learners; able to face the challenges in our immediate community and the world.
- To encourage a culture of high expectations and achievements within a diverse, stimulating and safe learning environment.
- To embrace new technologies in order to improve quality teaching and learning.

THE PURPOSE

1. To create a common approach to the processes of teaching and learning whilst allowing curriculum flexibility by supporting individual teacher and pupil creativity wherever possible.
2. To enable staff to develop their professional expertise to create the very best learning conditions.
3. To allow pupils to be aware of their preferred learning styles and the way in which they can maximise their learning opportunities to the best of their ability.
4. To ensure that as pupil's progress through the key stages they are able to become increasingly independent learners.
5. To celebrate teaching and learning successes and share best practice for future developments taking advantage and implementing any theoretical understanding of ways that learning can be enhanced.
6. To provide feedback to pupils and their parents on learning processes and progress.

7. To provide a safe and well resourced learning environment which allows for dynamic and motivational learning to take place.
8. To provide appropriate challenge to pupil's learning and provide individual targets and collaborative strategies for each pupil's improvement and to support whole school cross curricular strategies such as literacy, numeracy and ICT.
9. To allow senior managers in conjunction with Heads of Departments to evaluate the outcomes of teaching and learning through the process of school self review.
10. To prepare pupils for life long learning and their role in a global society.

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Policy into Practice

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Lesson Observation



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Lesson Observation Form

Teacher: _____ Observer: _____

Class: _____ Subject: _____ Date: _____

Focus of Observation: _____

LESSON OBSERVATION SHEET (draft)

Criteria : Some of the following excellence indicators should be observed.	Comments
1. Teacher Preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seating plan used and available• Mark book with target and assessed grades available and SEN pupil information• Teacher on-time and dressed appropriately• Teacher familiar with names and interests of pupils• Teacher has resources available• Teacher has planned for VARK learning preferences• Lesson plan available• Lesson plan differentiated with access to all VARK learning preferences	
2. Lesson beginning <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher welcomes pupils into class• Engages in conversation with pupils• Seating plan adhered to• Pupils directed to first activity• Positive reinforcement given• Teacher generates a relaxed, purposeful atmosphere	

<p>3. The Overview of lesson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific learning objectives on display for whole lesson and shared with pupils • Starter activity used which links to learning objectives • Work from previous lesson reviewed • Lesson is linked to prior knowledge • Lesson given a wider context • Interest is generated and curiosity stimulated • A clear set of targets are given which have challenge • Open questioning used 	
<p>4. The Input of the lesson (new information)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher exposition suitably brief to maintain student interest • Information delivered in a variety of VARK learning styles • Inputs punctuated by short activities to develop understanding • Teacher uses appropriate technical language • Teacher checks that all pupils understand technical language and subject-specific terms • Closed questioning used to test shallow understanding • Open questioning to test deep understanding 	
<p>5. Processing (checking understanding)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent pupil-student interactions to demonstrate pupil understanding • Frequent pupil-pupil interactions to develop and demonstrate understanding • Open-ended questioning to develop understanding and reflect on thinking • Supplementary questions used • Tasks require pupils to think • Emphasis is on re-creating rather than reproducing information • Pupils verbalise understanding • Pupils process in a choice of learning styles 	

<p>6. Lesson Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient time available to the plenary • Activity involves pupils in the review process • There is explicit reference to learning objectives • Pupils encouraged to reflect on how they have learned • Information provided in order to stimulate thought before the next lesson 	
<p>7. Class Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register taken at suitable point • Teacher responsible for ensuring classroom is an attractive learning environment with pupil display prominent • There is a good pace to the lesson • Pupils reminded of ground rules where necessary • Teacher insists on high standard of behaviour • Teacher catches pupils being good • Positive praise used regularly • Pupils reminded of targets/objectives where necessary • Class controlled in line with school policy • All pupils referred to by first name (or nickname if agreed with pupil) • Pupils rewarded for good work or behaviour • Books marked according to school policy • Class dismissed as school policy 	

Feedback

<p>Strengths</p>	
<p>Areas for further development</p>	
<p>Targets</p>	

Effective Teaching

An effective teacher is able to use a variety of teaching styles to fulfill a range of planned learning intentions. What we do as teachers makes a big difference to the quality of learning. This involves:

- an understanding of the learning needs of children
- an ability to manage a flexible grouping structure
- developing a stimulating learning environment
- a good understanding of differentiation
- thorough planning
- evaluating learning outcomes
- managing time effectively
- adhering to policies consistently

The bedrock of the Teaching and Learning policy is effective learning in the classroom. The lesson observation criteria sheet (see attached) serves dual purposes - to make explicit what effective teaching involves, and to provide a list of excellence indicators which make it very easy for observers to highlight effective practices that are present in the lesson. This criteria sheet is used as the basis for all classroom observations. The school promotes a **5 phase lesson approach** which can be applied to a stand alone lesson or a **Critical Skills** challenge over a series of lessons.

The following is a guide to what effective teaching involves:

Providing a stimulating learning environment in which

- resources are appropriate, accessible and well managed
- classroom routines are established
- there is a calm atmosphere and the school's behaviour policy is operating effectively
- a range of displays are used to motivate and value the children's work
- teachers develop positive relationships with the children
- Teachers treat all children fairly and talk to the children in an appropriate way.

Delivering lessons that

- have clear well focused learning objectives which are explained to the children
- include tasks which are relevant, challenging and well presented
- ensure that work is matched to the children's learning preferences and abilities
- are well paced with challenge
- have a high expectation
- make effective use of teaching assistants
- enable attainment and progress to be made

Demonstrating

- a good command of the subject matter
- thorough planning
- effective questioning skills
- that both teacher and pupil time is well managed

Using a range of

- teaching styles and resources which fit the purpose of the task
- teaching styles which vary over a day/ week / units of study
- grouping children for learning
- activities which incorporate different ways of learning

Having a sound knowledge of children's progress through

- Using target grades positively to promote opportunities to progress
- regular marking to identify strengths and weaknesses based on grade comparison to target grade
- frequent feedback to individuals which involve constructive smart targets
- formative assessment carried out in the classroom on a regular basis
- summative assessment tasks planned across the year with a consistent grading system used
- informing Heads of Learning of progress using comparison to target grades through staff Sims.net input
- moderating children's work to ensure consistency of quality
- using assessment to inform planning

Reporting to

- parents to inform them about the children's progress via parents evenings and school reports where progress is made clear by comparison of target to attained grades
- parents to share learning aims and inform them of how they can support their children in their learning
- colleagues as children transfer from class to class or school to school

We want children to become confident and independent learners who:

- have an essential basic knowledge
- are numerate and literate
- are self determined life long learners
- are highly motivated
- promote self development
- have high self esteem
- are confident they can succeed and progress

We need to develop consistent standards in the effective management of our classrooms.

The purpose of this is:

- to develop well defined systems of organisation
- to manage resources effectively

There is a common style in the way our classrooms work which:

- provides the children with an understanding of routines and systems
- develops a consistent expectation of how the children should work
- allows children responsibility in the running of the classroom
- develops independence in learning

There should be a flexible use of the way the furniture is arranged. The classroom should

- be warm and welcoming
- be comfortable and safe
- make the best use of available space
- be tidy and organised
- have resources which are clearly labelled and accessible
- have flexible organisation to suit a range of teaching and learning styles

Future Developments:

- Stronger and more relevant reward/sanction system built into the T&L structure
- Possible whole school Assessment for Learning system put in place (perhaps in exercise books/planners?)
- Introduce regular cross-curricular projects highlighting the T&L ideas above
- Standardised revision lessons before topic tests
- Pupil journals for self evaluation
- Quality time for reflection and self-evaluation (possible PSE/Registration time) PSE lessons could be a powerful tool in developing what we need to achieve
- Whole school posters could be created and displayed not just in classrooms but also in corridors etc

Some of the ideas which come naturally to us are often alien to the pupils. Thus we need to explicitly teach a lot of the above concepts, perhaps by having whole school study skills days etc or whole school critical skills work on revision ideas etc. This will empower the pupils to become more independent learners and highlight the areas they need to concentrate on.

Regarding the different learning styles, we, as teachers, need to challenge ourselves professionally and give the pupils as many different learning methods as possible. It is often the case that we teach the pupils the way it suits us!