



Academic Year 2019 – 20
ST MARY’S HALL TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

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BACKGROUND

The educational experience of the children is based firmly upon the intentions of Ignatian Pedagogy:

‘Jesuit schools should be places where people are believed in, honoured and cared for; where natural talents and creative abilities are recognised and celebrated; where individual contributions and accomplishments are appreciated; where sacrifice on behalf of the economically poor, the socially deprived, and the educationally disadvantaged is commonplace; where each of us finds the challenge, encouragement and support we need to reach our fullest individual potential for excellence; where we help one another and work together with enthusiasm and generosity, attempting to model concretely in word and action the ideals we uphold’.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At Stonyhurst St Mary’s Hall (SMH) we recognise the importance of constructing a firm foundation on which all aspects of education (learning and self-discovery) are built. At this preparatory stage, this is a process that is truly collaborative between all constituents, that is to say, pupils, teachers, parents, governors, chaplains and other professional agencies.
- 1.2 All such processes are subject to continuous evaluation.
- 1.3 It is our belief that education is a route to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development leading towards an individual’s well-being in the context of society and the world at large.
- 1.4 At SMH we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the idea that both adults and children learn new things every day; horizons should be expanded and perspectives widened.
- 1.5 We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help prepare children to lead happy and rewarding lives using their gifts and developing their knowledge to improve the world around them and the lives of fellow human beings on our planet as men and women for others.
- 1.6 All opportunities should be available equally to all pupils (see Policy for Equality).
- 1.7 Furthermore, at SMH, in particular, we are mindful of the school’s *raison d’être* which is absolutely founded in the work and intentions of Ignatius Loyola. The purpose of a Jesuit school is ‘improvement in living and learning for the Greater Glory of God and the common good’.
- 1.8 Alongside these central principles, we wish to emphasise a spirit of creativity, innovation, risk and challenge, as well as a growth mindset, within a culture of support, so that the concept of a love of learning is inextricably linked to a love of life and a celebration of life for the Greater Glory of God.

2. AIMS

“Let us aim high but” see OBJECTIVES

Through the application of the principles contained in our Teaching and Learning Policy we aim to help each child to find God in all things through education and formation of the whole person. We acknowledge that all aspects of teaching and learning are relevant ways of encountering and responding to God:

- 2.1 develop high standards of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum
- 2.2 enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring, enterprising and reflective independent learners
- 2.3 inculcate in our pupils the self-motivation and self-discipline to fulfil potential

- 2.4 foster children's self-esteem and develop 'resilience'.
- 2.5 work to ensure each child explores and extends their creative acumen
- 2.6 encourage children to build positive relationships by respecting the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others
- 2.7 help children to grow into reliable, decent and positive citizens
- 2.8 assist the children in understanding their community by helping them to feel valued as important parts of the wider group
- 2.9 show appropriate respect for all cultures, races, religions, minority groups and points of view different from our own
- 2.10 provide an educational environment which allows pupils to progress, not just for the purpose of preparing for the future, but also for the sheer joy of learning as an enriching and rewarding day-to-day experience
- 2.11 nurture a spirit of optimism and positive outlook
- 2.12 form young people who are set to grow as men and women for others.

3. OBJECTIVES

We strive to promote academic excellence and human competence

".....let us make our targets achievable and incremental"

To produce literate and numerate pupils

- 3.1 To improve standards in academic performance, music, art, sport, information technology, wider activities and other areas of school life. This may be undertaken against measurable criteria and standardised data where feasible and appropriate (e.g. CAT profiles and norm referenced, standardised data, Reading Ages, Music exams, levelling work using NC criteria, etc., etc.)
- 3.2 To provide documentary evidence of pupil progress and targets
- 3.3 To integrate new pupils successfully according to previous experiences, current performance and potential
- 3.4 To negotiate successfully the annual transitions from chronological year groups via appropriate internal assessments and understanding of the 'whole child'.
- 3.5 To secure successful passage into the College from this preparatory phase at the time of transfer
- 3.6 To integrate new staff into school procedures, practices and ethos
- 3.7 To provide sufficiently challenging standards for staff by way of professional review, support and promotional aspirations to enable stimulating career development opportunities to occur
- 3.8 To ensure suitable continuity and progression in curriculum and pastoral needs between KS2/KS3 internally within SMH, particularly in relation to the peer group cohort and, most importantly the individual child
- 3.9 To 'go the extra mile' for those in need of care and encouragement
- 3.10 To communicate effectively with parents as partners in the educational process
- 3.11 To inform and liaise with School Governors regarding whole-school and specific development plans and needs

4. EFFECTIVE LEARNING

This stems from an appreciation of the Ignatian Paradigm. "Children learn better when they are excited and engaged but....." see EFFECTIVE TEACHING

4.1 THE FUNDAMENTAL ASPECTS OF LEARNING

Children are encouraged to develop their literacy skills through critical and reflective thinking, speaking, listening, reading and writing and to develop their numeracy skills by consolidating the four basic rules of number and through regular practice and practical application of all such skills across the curriculum.

4.2 THE PSYCHOLOGY OF LEARNING

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to develop strategies that allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them whilst providing them with regular opportunities to learn in a variety of different ways to prompt the development of a range of learning skills. . The psychology of learning should be a matter of ongoing fascination for all those involved in education.

4.3 THE DIFFERENT LEARNING CHANNELS

How children learn through the various mediums for understanding, presenting and receiving knowledge should be considered carefully. The psychologist Howard Gardner, for example, identifies seven main areas of intelligence: **linguistic, logical/mathematical, visual/spatial, kinaesthetic, musical, interpersonal/group working, and interpersonal/reflective** and we should take into account these different forms of thinking when planning how to reach out to such different learning styles.

4.4 ENJOYMENT AND RAPPORT

We are always aware that positive relationships, warmth and understanding between staff and pupils, and each other, are fundamental to an effective learning experience leading towards strong personal growth. Learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone; it should be fun. Children should be engaged in the learning process so that they become excited, intrigued, fascinated and enthused by what they do and learn.

4.5 APPROACHES

We offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways. These include:

- 4.5.1 through play
- 4.5.2 investigation, observation and problem solving
- 4.5.3 research and discovery – individually and collaboratively
- 4.5.4 working in 1:1 situations with adults
- 4.5.5 paired work and group work
- 4.5.6 independent work including the responsibility for catching-up on work missed for various reasons
- 4.5.7 project work
- 4.5.8 whole-class work
- 4.5.9 Forest School and specific outdoor education
- 4.5.10 use of technology
- 4.5.11 fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest including the Stonyhurst Collections, buildings, estate and libraries
- 4.5.12 links with charitable organisations and the implementation of fund-raising activities
- 4.5.13 a wider environmental awareness of sustainability and conservation (eco awards)
- 4.5.14 experience of visiting speakers
- 4.5.15 liaison and interaction with our companion school in Zimbabwe in addition to Xavier Project in Kenya and Uganda (emerging opportunity)

- 4.5.16 exploring the natural world
- 4.5.17 creative activities including role play, improvisation and drama
- 4.5.18 watching video clips and responding to musical or recorded material
- 4.5.19 Regular opportunities to read and/or perform in public
- 4.5.20 debates, oral presentations, interview situations
- 4.5.21 participation in athletic or physical activity.
- 4.5.22 experience of different teaching styles and delivery
- 4.5.23 opportunities for independent learning and problem solving
- 4.5.24 opportunities to revisit and revise
- 4.5.25 opportunities for self-evaluation

4.6 TEACHERS IN JESUIT SCHOOLS EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Experience – learning begins with the sharing of experience

Reflection – teaching helps pupils to reflect on their experience and improves their knowledge, understanding and skills.

Action – opportunities are created for pupils to put their learning into action and so gain more experience of life.

Teachers in Jesuit schools understand the context of pupils’ learning.

4.7 THE MAGIS CURRICULUM

Encourages staff to and pupils to consider more widely and reflect and evaluate critically. Encourage and challenge to go deeper and wider in learning, reading and reflection in order to encourage and support ‘action’.

4.8 PUPIL RESPONSIBILITY

We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn – what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn. They are also encouraged to be part of the process that leads towards self-evaluation. Class Teachers, Form Tutors and Specific Subject Teachers play a key role in assisting the pupils in this task and in reviewing targets.

5. EFFECTIVE TEACHING

“.....what excites and engages children best is truly excellent teaching”

5.1 A FUNDAMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

The acquisition of secure literacy and numeracy skills lies at the heart of the educational process and all teachers accept their own individual responsibility in improving such standards.

5.2 RELATIONSHIPS AND CONDUCT

We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all. Each of our teachers makes a special effort to establish warm working relationships with all children in the class. We treat the children with kindness and respect. We value the children’s own contributions to their learning. We treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. We expect all children to comply with the expectations and guidelines of our Behaviour Policy to promote the best learning opportunities for all. We praise children for their efforts and, by so doing, help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. We insist on good order and behaviour at all times. Praise is used to promote and reward positive behaviour, kindness alongside effort and progress. The direct use

of praise to simply mark “success” on a specific task or a high performance score should be used carefully and sensitively in order to help avoid development of a ‘fixed mind-set’. Praise should be explicit and specific. The focus and emphasis is also upon praise to recognise sustained effort and progress leading to improved task related performance. It is very important that each child recognises and identifies that ‘we believe’ in him/her.

5.3 APPROACHES

What we teach and **how** we teach should recognise a completely multi-sensory approach that takes into account all expressions of intelligence and types of thinking alluded to in the previous section on LEARNING; all such aspects of learning should inform our teaching. **If children cannot learn the way we are teaching then we must teach them the way they can learn.** Through INSET and Subject/Departmental initiatives, including peer observation and team-teaching, we endeavour to ensure that the most appropriate teaching approaches are adopted to suit the needs of the occasion. Particular attention should be paid to Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and Educational Health Plans (EHCs) in support of pupils with specific learning needs or more complex needs to ensure these are provided for in every area of the curriculum.

5.4 THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUPIL KNOWLEDGE

Through our teaching, we equip children with the skills, competencies, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about things that will become important in their lives. We strive for this to facilitate pupils putting learning into action and so gain more experience of life.

5.5 THE DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF KNOWLEDGE

Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of their particular subject areas at age-appropriate levels to the pupils they teach and keep themselves informed about new developments and thinking in their subjects, as well as in education generally. This process is augmented by such initiatives as: group/team planning sessions; peer observation; group/team moderation meetings; specific reading provided by the school’s Head, Deputy Heads (SMH and College) or subject coordinators/Head of Department; INSET opportunities and training; the appraisal process.

5.6 PROFESSIONAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT

All our teachers reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and plan their professional development needs accordingly with reference to subject coordinators, the relevant line managers and Senior Leadership Team. We do all we can to support our teachers in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their performance and have the opportunity to observe colleagues teaching in order to share good practice.

5.7 CURRICULUM STANDARDS AND DIFFERENTIATION

We use the school’s subject curriculum plans to guide our teaching. These increasingly set out the aims, objectives and values of the various subjects within the overall context of the school and detail what is to be taught to each year group. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child’s needs and current level of performance. When planning work for children with special educational needs we give due regard to information and targets contained and strategies recommended in the Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and also any

Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCs) in support of children. We utilise Learning Support Assistants and other adult helpers (e.g. PLSAs, GAP Assistants) as effectively as possible. Sometimes they work with individual children and sometimes they work with small groups (Wave 1/2/3). See separate policy on Learning Support. We have high expectations of all children, and strive to ensure that their work and learning here at SMH is of the highest possible standard.

Foundation Stage

Children in the EYFS follow their own curriculum based on topics and children's interests. Planning identifies key teaching objectives and statements from the Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage Document (2012), where pupils have one-to-one, group and whole class lessons to meet these objectives. Therefore, children have a personalised learning experience to help them achieve their potential. Teaching is based around the seven areas of learning and development:

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
2. Communication and Language
3. Literacy
4. Mathematics
5. Understanding the World
6. Expressive Arts and Design
7. Physical Development

For children to engage and remain motivated with their learning environment, we adopt Characteristics of Effective Learning which underpin their learning and development:

- Playing and Exploring (engagement)
- Active Learning (motivation)
- Creating and thinking critically (thinking)

Learning is primarily through play where areas of learning are enhanced. The areas are changed regularly and stimulate children's interests and needs. Continuous provision allows children to freely explore areas of the classroom, both indoor and outdoor. Alongside this, formal phonics lessons use the Read Write Inc scheme and children access whole class and group maths lessons using the Abacus scheme.

Formative assessment of learning is primarily through observations of children engaged in the activities. Observations and evidence of learning is documented in the child's online Tapestry journal which is continuously available to parents. We track learning progress to intend on meeting the seventeen Early Years Goals by the end of FS2, where the Early Years Profile is completed. The profile demonstrates the children's learning and development into a best fit category, "expected", "emerging", "exceeding".

5.8 TARGETS AND ASSESSMENT

We provide clear objectives and guidance to inform the next steps in children's learning for the children in each academic year and we share these targets with children and their parents through informal and formal meetings, termly reports and ongoing marking of assignments. We review the progress of each child at various stages throughout the year (see point 4.5 above) and take into account

ongoing pastoral/emotional issues that might impact on a child's capacity to learn and/or meet targets at any given time. We assess pupils' work thoroughly and constructively, using such assessment to inform teaching (see Marking and Assessment Policies).

5.9 PLANNING AND RESOURCES

We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives. We take into account objectives from the National Curriculum, as it evolves but we are not constrained by such prescription. The curriculum is deliberately broad, with a particular focus upon providing for the richness of experience utilising an equally rich array of tasks and resources.

The children in Year 1 to 6 (PP1 to Upper Elements) use an integrated humanities curriculum as a platform for thematic learning in humanities. The principle is to focus on a combination of academic, personal, and international learning for children combined with innovative, exciting, engaging and real ways to learn. This includes a clear progression in skill development. We strive to map objectives and content where applicable and relevant in terms of continuity and progression. Strong links with English and extended writing are encouraged. Curriculum content and planning keeps a focus upon the National Curriculum in science, geography, history, art, drama and music. At all stages opportunities are taken to extend and enrich the learning journey through access to the wider and higher level facilities and resources associated with Stonyhurst e.g. Collections, buildings and estate and the Observatory.

Years 7 and 8 are grouped pastorally into tutor groups and arranged into parallel linear classes for some subjects and streamed sets in English, mathematics and languages. The curriculum is delivered by subject specialists. **Years 7 and 8 continue to access the resources available across the Stonyhurst campus.**

Modern languages are considered important, with specialist teaching in French and Spanish increasing in curriculum time as the children ascend the school. German and Latin enter the curriculum in KS3 (Year 7).

Our lesson plans typically contain information about the tasks to be set and the way we assess the children's work according to the needs of the children and the demands of the subject. We evaluate lessons so that we can modify and improve our teaching strategies, lesson objectives, differentiation, use of resources, etc, in the light of experience for the future. Teachers also use 'studies' (homework) effectively to reinforce and/or extend that which has been taught in lessons. Great care is taken to ensure that the use of time and resources is managed effectively to enhance the teaching. We consider relevant cross-curricular initiatives and higher order thinking activities wherever suitable, as a matter of course. School trips and visits – locally/nationally/internationally are a key aspect of planning for the learning experience.

5.10 HEALTH AND SAFETY

We ensure that all tasks and activities that the children do are safe. When we plan to take children out of school, we inform parents and ensure their permission. Staff involved in out-of-school activities are expected to follow all risk assessment and health and safety guidance. Equally, it is important that the local rules established in places like the Sports Hall and The Science Laboratory, for example, and other high-risk areas, are applied consistently and understood by all. We believe that

children need to learn to judge and appreciate risk through guidance and carefully managed opportunity. Furthermore, we aim to provide suitable opportunities for the children to appreciate risk and that such strategies are not concerned merely with the physical aspects but also with emotional, psychological, social and developmental considerations so that the children are encouraged to 'step out' of the comfort zones in order to become more confident and more complete individuals. Such activities are not just teacher-led but orientated towards the children so that their own initiatives, enterprise, etc, are active component parts of the process.

5.11 CLASS ENVIRONMENTS AND DISPLAY

Our teaching areas are attractive and stimulating learning environments. We change displays regularly to ensure that the classroom reflects the topics and themes studied by the children. We ensure that children have the opportunity to display their work according to the particular demands of the curriculum at any given point in time. All classrooms have relevant resources and this provision is reviewed regularly in the School's Development planning which is informed by staff input after staff consultation. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by the children.

The learning environment will be managed in a way that supports the learning taking place. Features of this will include:

- Furniture will be arranged to facilitate different types of organisation – whole class teaching both at desks and on the floor, small group work and one to one.
- Learning resources in use in the lesson will be clear and visible for all children and special arrangements made as necessary for access pupils.
- Other resources will be stored and clearly labeled.
- Areas such as book corners and prayer areas will be comfortable and attractive.

In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage One areas such as imaginative and role play areas will be changed regularly.

The Role of Teaching Assistants

We have a small number of support staff in the within the school who play a central and specialised role in our learning processes. Key elements of their role include:

- To support the teaching – either through direct delivery or by enabling access for identified pupils
- Teach a small group
- Supervise a larger group of pupils while the class teacher teaches a particular group
- Carry out assessments
- Support planning
- Prepare resources
- Supporting children with ILPs/or emotional difficulties

Outdoor Learning

Stonyhurst is privileged in terms of its setting and SMH offers a unique outdoor learning environment that helps to consolidate and extend curriculum topics and objectives covered in the classroom. Children use tools, play, learn boundaries of behaviour, both physical and social, and grow in confidence, self-esteem and motivation. Cross curricular links are explored when planning Outdoor Learning sessions. Children in the EYFS, Key Stage 1 and 2 spend time in the outdoor environment including our woodland and Mission Garden on a regular basis.

6. THE ROLE OF THE PARENTS

6.1 PARENTS AS PRIMARY EDUCATORS

We believe that parents are the primary educators in helping children to learn.

6.2 WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL DO?

We do all we can to inform parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- 6.2.1 hosting parents' meetings
- 6.2.2 sending information to parents
- 6.2.3 sending regular reports to parents in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can improve further
- 6.2.4 explaining to parents how they can support their children with 'studies'. We suggest, for example, regular shared reading with very young children, plus 'Talk Studies' and support for older children with their projects and investigative work.
- 6.2.5 In circumstances when parents are unable to maintain such active links with the educational process, as suggested above, (e.g. in the case of parents of 'full-boarding' pupils), the Houseparents (in loco parentis) and/or Class Teachers and Form Tutors will then exert a more direct influence over and above their normal supervision and input – including specific reading and 'studies' support for young boarders.
- 6.2.6 referring to Pupil Diaries when appropriate.
- 6.2.7 'Recommended Reading Lists' and web links will be compiled from time to time and sent to parents for consideration.
- 6.2.8 making Presentations to parents regarding, for example, internet safety, the Curriculum, transitions between year groups and Enrichment Week opportunities.
- 6.2.9 providing seminars and educational opportunities for parents themselves.

6.3 WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

As a key component in the Team Around the Child we believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We expect parents to:

- 6.3.1 fulfil the requirements and support the mission, values and codes of practice as set out in relevant school policies/handbooks including the Mission Statement.
- 6.3.2 ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible
- 6.3.3 ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and equipment
- 6.3.4 do their best to keep their child well-balanced in outlook, as well as in maintaining a sensible overview of additional activities so that the child does not become overloaded, exhausted or stressed.

- 6.3.5 inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school
- 6.3.6 promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general
- 6.3.7 engage and communicate with staff as/when necessary.
- 6.3.8 Work in partnership with the school, with the child at the heart of the process

7. THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNORS

- 7.1 We believe that governors have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn by reference to the following points:
 - 7.1.1 understanding and maintaining the established mission and identity of the school.
 - 7.1.2 supporting the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively.
 - 7.1.3 ensuring that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning.
 - 7.1.4 being informed of teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations.
 - 7.1.5 being informed of how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment with reference to the subject-specific Self-Evaluation documents.
 - 7.1.6 ensuring that staff development, appraisal and performance management policies promote good quality teaching.
 - 7.1.7 being advised about the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the school's self-evaluation processes.

All of the above information is based largely on The Headmaster's Termly Report, as well as regularly commissioned additional reports from other members of the Leadership Team and/or key academic and pastoral staff as requested.

8. MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 8.1 We are aware of the need to review the school teaching and learning policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school. The monitoring of teaching and learning is used to inform future developments in the curriculum through the school's development plan and the changing priorities of professional development. We will review this policy regularly and incorporate into STAFF INSET and CPD programmes as appropriate.

9. GENERAL

- 9.1 This policy statement should be read in conjunction with other relevant school documentation particularly regarding mission and curriculum matters.

October 2019

LDS