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St Paul's Cathedral School

**Policy on Teaching and Learning,
Presentation, Marking and Assessment**

October 2021

AIMS & PRINCIPLES

St Paul's Cathedral School is a Christian, co-educational community which holds to the values of love, justice, tolerance, respect, honesty, service and trust in its life and practice, to promote positive relationships throughout the school community and where the safety, welfare and emotional well-being of each child is of the utmost importance.

The school aims to instil a love of learning through a broad curriculum. It aims to give each pupil the opportunity to develop intellectually, socially, personally, physically, culturally and spiritually. All pupils are encouraged to work to the best of their ability and to achieve standards of excellence in all of their endeavours.

Through the corporate life of the school, and through good pastoral care, the school encourages the independence of the individual as well as mutual responsibility. It aims to make its pupils aware of the wider community, espouses the democratic process and encourages a close working relationship with parents and guardians.

Introduction

The expectation at SPCS is that all pupils are provided with high quality learning experiences that lead to consistently high levels of pupil achievement and skills for life. These expectations are promoted through a spirit of spontaneity, creative thinking and exploration in the classroom. Teachers are encouraged to explore subjects tangentially as and when pupils' curiosity is sparked.

Specific additional guidance for SEND and High Ability pupils is presented within individual departmental handbooks.

Aims

- to foster a love of learning;
- to give pupils the skills and knowledge and promote the understanding they require to become confident, disciplined, independent and effective lifelong learners;
- to provide an inclusive education for all pupils;
- to value and respect all cultures;
- to provide a safe and happy learning environment;
- to raise levels of achievement for all pupils, enabling them to achieve their personal best;
- to learn from each other, through the adoption of a collaborative, enquiry based approach to teaching and learning, where good practice is shared;
- to enable teachers and support staff to teach as effectively as possible;
- to enable pupils to learn as effectively as possible;

Promoting Effective Teaching and Learning

Inspirational teaching should:

- increase motivation;
- encourage creativity and imagination;
- develop communication skills;
- foster healthy scepticism as a method of acquiring knowledge;
- encourage justification of beliefs through analysing and hypothesising;
- develop confidence, self-esteem and emotional identification.

Learning at SPCS is the sharing and acquisition of knowledge and skills to increase our understanding.

At SPCS, we try to create Internationally Minded pupils who can recognise and celebrate similarities and differences between themselves and others around the world.

Effective Learning involves:

- teachers and pupils being clear about the purpose of learning and the expected outcomes;
- pupils asking questions of themselves and each other as part of the process of learning;
- pupils self-assessing and learning evaluative skills;
- teachers giving effective feedback that helps pupils to recognise their achievements and where to improve;
- teachers adjusting teaching and planning in response to pupils' levels of understanding.

Effective Learning is evidenced by:

- teachers who are actively listening and responding to pupils;
- pupils who are motivated, interested and willing and able to talk about their own learning;
- pupils who are actively involved in the process of their own learning.

Learning Objectives and Success Criteria

Extended learning objectives which may be worked on and developed over a course of work should be clearly evident within long term planning just as shorter term objectives and their monitoring criteria should be clearly defined in medium and short term plans. Long, Medium and Short term planning should be easily accessible within departmental folders.

Over-arching Long Term Learning Objectives

Independent Learning

Our aim is that pupils should develop a love of learning, and part of this is for them to be proud of their individual success. For this to be achieved pupils must develop independent learning skills. To achieve this:

- pupils should become fluent and independent readers as soon as possible;
- pupils should be introduced to a range of books, both fiction and non-fiction, that reinforce their learning;
- pupils should experience a rich variety of academic learning, including discussion, practical activities, note taking, drawing, sustained writing, group activities and games.

Teachers should ensure that pupils understand and can discern the difference between what they have to do (using skills they know) and the new knowledge/understanding they will gain from applying these methods.

The Learning Objective should not become a hindrance/block to tangential learning which may develop as a result of interaction between the teacher and the pupils. Teachers should feel able to modify/change their Learning Objective and their associated success criteria.

Learning objectives:

- may be shared orally, written down by pupils or displayed
- are not always shared at the very start of the lesson, but at an appropriate time once the pupils' interest and enthusiasm has been captured. They may also be re-iterated and referred to later in the lesson
- may be skills based and may not be linked to the factual content of the lesson may run over a number of lessons

Good Learning Objectives:

- explain clearly the reasons for the lesson
- Should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant/Realistic and Time bound)
- should avoid terms which cannot be measured for success (e.g. know, understand, learn)
- should use child-friendly language if the LO is shortened/adjusted for sharing with pupils

Example (Teacher's version)

"LO; Within our study of fractions (R), by the end of this weeks' four lessons (T), pupils will score at least 80% (M) in an appropriate level exercise (A) on the adding together of proper fractions with single digit denominators (S)"

not just

"LO; Learn how to add fractions using a common denominator"

Success Criteria:

- may be shared orally, written down by pupils, displayed or by a combination of these methods
- that effective questioning and active listening is integral to success and can be evidence in live sessions
- explain clearly to pupils what is expected in relation to the learning objective
- may be staged to provide a tiered level of success framework – but care must be taken not to pigeon-hole children through these techniques
- link to pupils' individual learning targets
- may be generated by the pupil
- assessment/grading should be linked to performance against these criteria

Delivering a Lesson

Teachers should ensure that pupils are, at all times, aware of their expectations for all aspects of the lesson (behaviour, presentation, involvement, effort etc.) and should remind pupils regularly (e.g. through display material and verbal cues).

Lessons may include:

- a review of where we are;
- an explanation (and possibly writing down) of Learning Objective(s);
- discussion, explanation, examples on board;
- an explanation (and possibly writing down) of Success Criteria – both general and linked to individual student targets
- sustained writing / activity
- research, and/or planning and exploratory discussion
- a plenary session summing up the ground covered
- a plenary session with opportunity for some pupils to demonstrate their understanding or to share their written work with others
- pupils' self-assessment of their work – e.g. using Green, Amber, Red

The end of the lesson is not necessarily the end of the piece of work. Pupils need time to revisit work and self-correct. This can be a feature/ part of homework.

Sustained Writing / Activity

Pupils feel successful if the work in their books demonstrates their understanding and is something of which they can be proud. To achieve this there must be sufficient content in their exercise books to:

- record their understanding;
- be assessed by the teacher;
- enable them to self-assess;
- allow them to revise from the work.

Planning should allow pupils access to a range of learning opportunities and differentiated tasks to promote the most effective learning possible for all individuals.

Pupil assessment (Self & Peer)

Pupils can decide if they feel they have achieved the objective in lessons by using a number of systems.

Possible methods include:

- a) The traffic light system
- b) The identification and “claiming” of personal targets related to success criteria.
- c) Progress indicators e.g. Next Steps symbols
- d) Self-assessment against rubrics
- e) Peer review. Teachers should not rely on peer review, and the task should be used sparingly. Occasional, teacher-guided peer review can be more beneficial.

Presentation of Work

The purpose of this policy is to ensure consistency throughout the school. It is important that the pupils are aware of what is expected from them. Pupils should be made aware of expectations in presentation of work at the start of the school year and reminded at regular intervals.

Work in exercise books should always be dated, using appropriate nomenclature for the age group. Titles should be underlined with a ruler

Details of age specific (e.g. Spacing between words in Pre-prep) and subject specific (e.g. layout of working in mathematics) presentation guidelines can be found in the appropriate departmental documentation.

In all subjects, attention must be paid to:

- handwriting;
- vocabulary;
- sentence construction;
- grammar.

Pupils should be made aware of the possibility for different levels of acceptable work depending on the requirements of the task (e.g. Note taking / First draft / Final Copy / Presentation Copy).

Also take care that:

- written work is done in blue or black ink once a pen licence has been issued;
- rulers are used to draw straight lines and underline headings;
- diagrams are drawn in pencil and coloured with colouring pencils by default. Staff may allow the use of felt pens in certain cases however;

Exercise books should be kept in good condition:

- no missed pages;
- no 'dog eared' pages or areas;

Staff must have high expectations and encourage pride in presentation of all work and should set an example by ensuring that displays and board work are well presented. Appropriate sanctions (as defined in the Good Behaviour Policy) should be used in the case of wilfully poor or repeatedly sub-standard presentation.

The maintenance of standards of presentation, layout and care of books are monitored by Heads of Department.

Marking

Pupils' work should be marked by the teacher with direct reference to the success criteria. Occasionally, pupils may mark/review their own or each other's work but teachers should still use spot checks on this to ensure accuracy. Work should be marked in a colour that distinguishes the teacher's comments from the pupil's work.

General Points

It is important to consider WHAT is being marked at any particular time, e.g. creative writing is being marked for content, mood, use of vocabulary, self-expression etc. – not just for spelling or punctuation. 'Mechanical' mathematics is being marked for just the mechanics, method, answer etc., whereas problem solving mathematics is being marked for logical and lateral thinking and application of skills and concepts. However, teachers must use their knowledge of and relationship with individual pupils when marking.

Teachers should indicate clearly any errors in spelling, punctuation and sentence construction. Frequent errors should inform a teacher that these objectives need to be covered in a lesson, or passed on the pupil's English teacher.

It is important that pupils' work is marked as soon as possible. Where possible, work should be marked before the next occasion on which the pupils are given their books. Whilst staff must never be marking instead of teaching, consultation with the pupil is a valuable tool for assessing learning and in giving praise.

Pupils learn best from praise and positive feedback. Marking should therefore include comments which praise their successes and, in the case of poor work, give a clear, written indication of what they should do next in order to improve.

It is recommended that departments adopt some/all of the correction indicators (e.g. sp. For a spelling error).

See Marking Appendix

Departmental/Subject variations and additions to nomenclature are detailed in the relevant handbooks.

General Marking Guidelines for Pre-Prep

- Verbal comments, discussion and feedback form part of each lesson and activity.
- Work should be marked either during the lesson with the child or as soon after the lesson as possible. Marking must be frequent and regular.
- It should be indicated on all written work who has worked with the child. (eg. Teacher assisted, TA assisted or Independent) Stampers provided for staff to use.
- Marking should be positive and personal. Effort, as well as attainment, can be praised. Marking and feedback should celebrate success whenever possible.
- Stamps, stickers and symbols can all be used to emphasise a good piece of work. A particularly successful piece of work may be awarded with a “Star of the Week” award in a Friday Celebration Assembly.
- Marking and comments should relate to the Learning Objective and success criteria.
- “Next Steps” should be set when appropriate and discussed with the child. (Next Step stampers provided.) These should be referred back to when the next piece of work is completed.
- Wrong answers should be circled and the child should be given a chance to have another go. Rubbing out should be kept to a minimum.
- Pupils in Reception are encouraged to write freely and independently. Phonetically plausible attempts and so emergent writing are accepted with little correction, although adults may scribe the child’s sentence above it.
- In Key Stage 1, pupils may be asked to correct and re-write incorrectly spelt high frequency words at the end of the work. Pupils should be encouraged to complete corrections as soon as possible after completing the work.

General Marking Guidelines - Prep School

It is essential that every subject has its own marking policy. This should be consistent with the general aims and directives of this policy, but should be related to the specific requirements of the subject.

Marks for attainment

- Not all work needs a numerical mark; positive comments are often more encouraging. House points can also be awarded and clearly marked HP.
- However, even if these marks are not always given to the pupils, enough numerical attainment marks should be recorded in electronic mark books on a regular basis so that staff can present evidence for formal grades given on reports. Where numerical marks are given, pupils should understand what these marks mean.

Marks for effort

- Pieces of work (especially those of an extended nature) may also include an effort grading. In this case, it is suggested that the report grading scale of A to E should be used. Any variation from this should be detailed in departmental documentation.

Half Term Report Grades

- Effort and Attainment grades should reflect marks and comments written in pupils' books. If requested, staff should be able to present evidence of the link between these.

End of Term Grades (on reports)

- Attainment grades should reflect attainment marks awarded during the term and take into account marks for classwork, homework, tests and examinations.
- Staff should take the time to explain grades to the pupils, especially when these are poor.

A poor report grade should never come as a surprise to a pupil or parent. Use of the lowest grade values (5 & E) should always have been preceded by a dialogue with the parents.

Correcting Spelling and Grammar

Attention needs to be paid to spelling and grammar to encourage good practice across the curriculum. It is everyone's responsibility to help pupils to develop the ability to communicate effectively both orally and on paper. To achieve this, teachers may use some or all of the following:

- High frequency and subject specific words should be identified if spelled incorrectly and the use of word banks and glossaries is encouraged.
- Once pupils have been taught to use capital letters, paragraphs and punctuation, errors should be corrected, but with discretion if mistakes are frequent.

Recording

Teachers should maintain an up-to-date, electronic mark book. A date and brief description of the work should always be included.

- Mark Book information should be kept electronically where it is accessible to all members of staff teaching in that department. Heads of department should ensure that all information is up to date (at least once each half term) and especially at the end of the academic year to facilitate transition.
- By agreement with the Head of Department and/or the Deputy Head (Academic), electronic mark books may contain key "milestone" marks and grades taken from a more extensive written record. E.g. the result of every spelling/vocabulary test need not be on the electronic record unless this is the only recording medium. Where the electronic mark book is a subset of a written record, the number of entries should be agreed with the Head of Department/Academic Deputy Head.
- The recommended level of entry into electronic mark books is the half the number of lessons per week rounded up.
- Test and examination marks from mark books must also be transferred onto the appropriate spreadsheets on the Shared Area and may also form part of departmental progress tracking records.
- Copies of pupils' reports are available on the school database system.

Formal Reports - Grading Descriptors

Effort (A – E)

A – Excellent attitude at all times, concentrates and participates eagerly in all activities, keen and always willing to try their best.

B - Good attitude, working hard, concentrates in lessons and participates well in a variety of tasks.

C - Willing approach most of the time, adequate concentration, will participate in tasks appropriately.

D - Generally does what is required but can lack self-motivation and concentration, sometimes only participates with encouragement.

E - Regularly displays a negative attitude to tasks, can be unwilling to participate, often needs support to focus and apply themselves to tasks.

Attainment (1 – 5)

1 - Consistently producing excellent work or performing at a level far above expectations.

2 - Most work produced is of a high standard, often above that of expectations.

3 - Working well, the standard produced most of the time satisfies expectations.

4 - Finds a number of areas of work difficult and regularly performs below expectations.

5 - Struggles with many areas, needs support to access the curriculum and often requires highly differentiated work, performance is significantly below expectations.

(“expectations” refers to the required standard for pupils of a similar age)

Marking Appendix:

Approved abbreviations / Marking Codes

The basic codes (as specified by the English department) should be used where appropriate

Cap. – Capital letter missed or misused

sp. – Spelling error

^ - Word/Letter missed

/ - New line required

// - New paragraph required

The purposes of marking:

A To assess:

- comprehension;
- progress;
- interest level;
- involvement/application.

B To encourage and praise positive attitudes:

- effort;
- industry;
- pride;
- presentation;
- enquiry;
- self-appraisal;
- initiative;
- application;
- completion of tasks.

C Teachers should note perpetual ‘faults’ and question why e.g.:

- spelling mistakes;
- poor presentation;
- lack of effort;
- expectations set too high/too low;
- lack of application;
- illness/physical disability;
- emotional problems;
- poor self-image;
- language difficulties.

Failure on the part of a child should always cause the teacher to question the validity of the work being given.

This policy will be reviewed as required
New Version – Sept 2018
Reviewed February 2020
Reviewed September 2021