



LOOE COMMUNITY ACADEMY

TEACHING, LEARNING & ASSESSMENT POLICY

2015

Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Policy

1. Introduction

High quality Learning and Teaching is the core purpose of Looe Community Academy. The individual teacher and lesson is the engine room that drives student achievement and progress, we strive to ensure that the learning needs of all students are recognised, valued and catered for so that all students achieve and exceed their potentials.

This policy applies to all staff who are directly involved with leading, delivering and or supporting teaching, learning and assessment. The aim of this policy is to enable all stakeholders to understand the ethos, values and expectations of the Academy. Our aims and values underpin all our policy and practice.

2. Purpose

Looe Community Academy considers, reflects, and revisits this policy to ensure expectations are embedded in our daily practice. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

- Staff have clear guidance with regards to expected standards of teaching, learning and assessment and the strategies that will be implemented to achieve these
- Good or better teaching, learning and assessment is the normal standard for all staff facilitating learning
- Staff meet current Professional Standards for Teachers in Education and teaching and learning targets linked to Performance Management
- Each learner is supported to achieve or exceed their potential whilst studying at Looe Community Academy
- Staff inspire all students to have a love of learning and a desire to continue to learn

3. Teaching & Learning

At LCA our aim is to provide high quality teaching for all students, each day, and every day. This is the core factor that sustains and drives improvement of student aspirations, attainment and rapid progress. A high quality lesson is characterised by the '**Seven Steps to Success**' where the following core principles are expected:

3.1) Clarity of Instruction

- Learning objectives are linked to explicit outcomes and are accessible at all times for the learners. Learners can articulate the purpose of their learning. Learners must know exactly what they are going to learn and what is expected of them by the end of the lesson.
- Success criteria
Success Criteria informs learners how they can be successful in the lesson. Depending on the lesson, these may be features to be included in the learning or show the process that the learners must go through to meet the desired outcomes. Success criteria is known as S2S (Steps to Success)

Learners must use explicit S2S when involved with self and peer assessment learning activities. Learning is more effective if students have a part to play in establishing the S2S.

3.2) Effective Questioning, Discussion and Exploration

- Effective questioning from the teacher creates higher levels of **thinking** by learners
- Good questions encourage learners to be explicit and clear about their own and others' **thinking**, which is useful for assessment. We develop surface to deep learning by:
 - Asking large proportion of open questions using Blooms Taxonomy
 - Allow 'Think' time and 'Turn and Talk' time to allow for learners to gain sufficient processing time.
 - Asking supplementary or extension questions to extend thinking. The best extension questions are aimed above what the learner can already demonstrate and within Vygotsky's "zone of proximal development".
 - Asking questions to encourage learners to reflect up on their own and others' thinking.
 - Challenging thinking
- Learners are given opportunities for exploration and discussion to find things out for themselves and/or learn from each other.
- Teachers are able to listen, observe and question learners further by successfully scanning the room and selecting 'what success looks like' and

any misconceptions or common errors learners have. Examples may include:

- Establishing S2S from a finished model;
- Exploring common errors or misconceptions
- Discussing a question or statement (including using Edward De Bono's Thinking Hats)
- Creating own questions when presented with answers of artefacts
- Using previous learning experiences to explore new material.

3.3) Relationships: Climate for Learning

- Teachers meet and greet their learners every lesson.
- Effective teachers are skilful in fostering positive teacher-student relationships by respecting and building upon what each child brings to the classroom.
- Teachers artfully use, “the skills of listening, empathy, caring, and having a positive regard for others” (Hattie, 2009, p. 118).
- It is by knowing and respecting students that effective teachers are able to differentiate instruction—they know when to re-teach, accelerate, or enrich and why differentiation is necessary because they know their students

3.4) Pitch & Pace

- Teachers have the highest expectations that everyone can achieve and/or exceed their target grades
- Teachers must use their judgement within the lesson to know when a lesson should move on to the next planned section. If children require more time for mastery on a set task or discussion, this should be allowed as long as they are making progress. If engagement is waning due to lack of variation or challenge, the lesson should move at a quicker pace
- When teachers differentiate, planning must be for the most able in terms of outcomes and then adapted as and when to overcome the barriers for other groups in their classes to enable all learners to access explicit outcomes
- Timely 'live' adaptation of questioning, resources, time, choice, feedback, support and grouping to differentiate is positively impacting on learner attainment and progress
- Teachers aim to challenge learners to operate in their 'zones of proximal development' (Vygotsky)

3.5) Formative Assessment for Visible Explicit Learning

Our focus is to develop independent assessment capable learners.

Assessment for learning's prime concern is with the here and now of learning. It occurs in the flow of activity and transactions occurring in the classroom. Authentic interpretations and enactments of assessment for learning improve students' learning, their engagement with learning, and their attainment as measured by tests, and most importantly help them become more **self-regulating, autonomous learners**.

Expected AfL strategies:

- **Learning objectives and outcomes** are shared with learners
- The differentiated use of **Success Criteria**
- **Questions** pose, pause, pounce, bounce, bounce
- Pair share square share
- **Self & Peer Assessment**
- **Advocacy of positive language** and behaviour management techniques
- **Types of Feedback:** Written, oral, self and peer
- **Written feedback process The 3+1 Cycle**
a) Assess and mark b) set task c) gain a response d) mark response. (b and c can be done during dedicated improvement time or through additional tasks set.) Refer to LCAT marking policy
- **Independent learning**

3.6) Visible Progress for All

- Teachers model explicit learning journeys in lessons and highlight different stages of progress explicitly to learners (i.e what good looks like)
- Learners can articulate where they are with their learning and can suggest strategies to solve their learning problems (e.g we call this being resilient, getting unstuck or getting out of the pit.)

Assessment capable learners can easily answer the following questions when asked about their progress in lessons:

1. What are you learning and why?
2. What do you need to demonstrate by the end of the lesson?
3. Do you know what 'success' looks like – can you describe it?
4. Can you tell me what you are doing well and what you need to improve?
5. How will you achieve your next steps to success? What learner strategies do you need to use to become successful?
6. Can you explain how your learning can transfer into other subjects or different aspects of life?
7. What is your current grade/level and target grade/level?

3.7) Learner Engagement through stretch and challenge

Teachers engage learners by promoting and praising agreed effective learner characteristics through the VIVO praise system. Learners are effectively engaged in lessons when teachers:

- Use assessment information to plan appropriate teaching and learning strategies for all students, especially for learners who fall behind in their learning, or who need additional support
- Learners feel stretched and challenged in their learning and see purpose in what they do
- Learners get chance to evaluate their learning experiences and teachers act on this

- Learners are taught to be assessment capable learners

4. Assessment Recording and Reporting

- The academy has an annual cycle for assessment, recording and reporting
- Our 1 – 9 assessment system from year 7 to year 11 reflects skills, knowledge and understanding for GCSE examination for 2017.
- Data is collected and analysed in SIMS , the schools information management system every half term to assess progress.
- Assessment data is reported to parents three times a year (two interims and one full written report)
- Each department has summative end of syllabus/module assessment tests at appropriate points in their course.

Monitoring & Evaluating

The Academy has well embedded systems for monitoring and evaluation including:

- Monitoring and evaluation is carried out by the leadership team and leaders of learning through data analysis, lesson observations, learning walks, book audits and feedback from students
- The leadership team and Leaders of Learning quality assures the quality of teaching and learning through paired observations
- The Academy conducts regular lesson observations and calculates staff performance by looking at individual, team and whole school averages over time
- Our academy gathers data overtime to inform staff performance of individuals and teams with reference to teacher standards

Continuing Professional Development

Teachers have high expectations and are evaluative of themselves and their students, they develop through CPD individual potential and always striving for the highest standards in all aspects of teaching and learning. Everyone is offered the opportunity to further develop their expertise through a range of CPD pathways and opportunities:

- Voluntary '**Teach Meets**' run fortnightly and are overseen by a range of staff including senior leaders and lead / aspiring practitioners. The aim is to share best practice to increase the percentage of outstanding teachers
- **Teacher Development Projects** are linked to local Universities and are ran to evaluate evidence based teaching and learning strategies
- **Coaching roles** are taken on by **expert teachers** to support other colleagues and quality assure standards of teaching, learning and assessment. **External coaching advisors** quality assure coaching skills and delivery.
- **NPQML course** is offered in partnership with **LSSW** to support potential middle leaders in leading T & L linked to whole school teaching and learning priorities
- **Established Middle Leadership** course design by LCA and partnership secondary schools to build networking opportunities between establishes middle leaders.

- **External courses** are agreed where necessary with the expectation that staff attending will share and report CPD on return.
- **Internal INSET** offers relevant CPD for teachers focusing on whole school development priorities such as questioning and surface to deeper learning. Staff must reflect on their own practice frequently and **IRIS** is used to support this process within department and faculty areas.
- CPD reports are written annually to assess the impact of teacher development and attainment.

This is a learning community

At LCA, there is a common purpose and shared responsibility amongst students, parents, staff and governors. All are actively committed to the life, growth and development of this school. There is intellectual challenge for everyone and a culture of learning and questioning practice.

Teachers share a common understanding achieved through discussion, consideration of practice, the sharing of information and whole school planning of important issues. Teachers are thoughtful and self-critical. Teachers' individuality is valued.

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| Author | K.Jackman |
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