



## **Croydon High School**

### **Learning and Teaching Policy**

The GDST's founding aim was that their schools should be 'Places not only of instruction but of education in the true sense of the word, which provide a training of the individual girl by the development of her mental and moral faculties'.

This broad view of education and of the value of the individual is at the heart of our modern curriculum.

Emphasis is placed on excellence and innovation, combined with breadth and balance.

All have access to a high quality learning environment and thus can maximise their talents and are encouraged to reach their full potential.

#### **Aims**

To provide quality learning opportunities that both foster a love of learning and raise attainment and achievement through the provision of effective teaching. In doing so we aim to ensure a common high quality of experience for all pupils to help maximise each individual's potential, whilst supporting creativity and individuality within teaching and learning and helping to spread and share teaching and learning practice that is of an excellent standard.

We also aim to provide an insight into the review and development of current and future teaching and learning practice, through relevant INSED, which enables staff and pupils to remain stimulated and focused.

#### **Key Principles**

##### **Quality Learning is characterized by the following:**

- pupils are captivated and enthused by what they are learning
- it is an active process – pupils invariably learn more effectively if they are doing
- there is an element of linking knowledge to previous learning
- effective support from the teacher through interaction and collaboration and is supported by both the teacher and other pupils, and takes the form of interaction, and collaboration
- it is characterized by cooperation, dialogue and creating knowledge with others

- learners take responsibility for their own learning through exercising choice, developing and setting personal goals, effective planning and independent working
- learners are reflective and effectively monitor and review their learning
- learners make progress that is over and above that predicted by baseline tests
- learners exhibit a real desire to contribute effort to maximize their learning outcomes

**and is underpinned by a setting where:**

- pupils are happy, relaxed and confident;
- pupils have a sense of worth and feel confident enough to make mistakes and where they are valued as individuals;
- lessons have clearly stated learning objectives and are interesting with varied teaching strategies are used as appropriate;
- assessment is supportive, constructive, positive and honest;
- teachers and parents work in partnership to support them;
- learning activities are well-planned;
- the learning task is matched to ability and there is provision for challenge, repetition and extension;
- the working environment is clean, attractive, stimulating and well resourced;
- there is an agreed code of conduct and a disciplined learning environment;
- learning occurs without unnecessary breaks or interruptions;
- teachers have high expectations and frequently offer praise.

**Classroom Practice**

**1. Learning Objectives are Identified & Shared**

Teachers should, in principle, communicate to the pupils two key pieces of information

- a) what the purpose of the lesson is
- b) what learning outcomes the teacher expects by the end of the lesson

This should be placed within the context of where the knowledge/understanding/skills etc sit within the wider subject curriculum (i.e. “where we’ve been” and “where this is taking us”).

To facilitate pupils’ awareness of the purpose of the lesson it would be useful to use phrases such as:

**“We want to be able to.....”**

“know that.....”

“understand how/why.....”

“develop.....”

“be aware of.....”

“explore.....”

“refine strategies for .....”

In addition using strategies such as **WILF** will inform pupils of what they need to do to succeed.

**“What I am looking for.....”**

“from everyone is.....”

“you to be successful is.....”

“for top marks is.....”

## **2. Review Learning To Link And Consolidate**

Review helps create links with previous learning. This helps build secure foundations for subsequent learning, so that learners can progressively develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, attitudes and values contained in the curriculum. An effective lesson will ideally be organised with opportunities for pupil progress to be shown, perhaps through the incorporation of a series of learning episodes with a longer review time (plenary) to reinforce the learning points. Pupils remember more from the beginning of a learning activity than they do from the middle. They also learn more from the end of the experience than they do from the middle. It follows that it is beneficial to create lots of beginnings and endings in a lesson. Review should be part of all beginnings and endings of all lessons and episodes, and therefore its effectiveness is important to learning.

This could be achieved by the teacher recapping the learning from the last lesson or, indeed pupils being involved in this process; recapping on the progress at regular

intervals throughout the lesson in relation to the learning objectives set out at the beginning; incorporation of a plenary at the end of the lesson to consolidate learning.

### **3. Variety of Learning Activity**

To make the learning experience as enjoyable as possible lessons should exhibit a variety of different learning episodes that capitalize on a number of different learning activities. This variety will enable learners of different times (i.e. visual, aural, kinesthetic etc) to make good progress as well as enable the teacher to tailor the lesson to individual learner's needs during learning episodes.

### **4. Development of Thinking Skills**

Reference should be made to thinking skills in the lesson so that all pupils develop a sense of the importance of developing their ability to think independently.

The thinking skills approaches identified by the school are:

#### **Information processing**

Finding relevant information

Organising information

Representing or communicating information

#### **Reasoning**

Giving reasons

Making inferences or deductions

Arguing or explaining a point of view

#### **Enquiry**

Asking questions

Planning research or study

Engaging in enquiry or process of finding out

#### **Creative thinking**

Generating ideas

Imagining or hypothesising

Designing innovative solutions

#### **Evaluation**

Developing evaluation criteria

Applying evaluation criteria

Judging the value of information and ideas

All lessons should aim to include one of these approaches in at least one part of the lesson and lesson observation will focus on this as one of the elements to be evaluated with the aim of improving the pedagogy used throughout the school.

## 5. Differentiation to Enable All Learners to Succeed

Differentiation should be seen as a continuous process that accommodates the needs of individual pupils at Croydon High School. It should ensure that teaching allows all learners to make at least their expected progress in relation to their capability and for the vast majority to make more progress than this minimum expectation. It should stretch the less able to work to their capabilities and the gifted and talented way beyond. Differentiation can only be achieved when it is based upon an informed review of the pupil's learning i.e. through a diagnostic and formative assessment procedure.

Differentiation within classes should therefore take account of pupils' baseline, benchmark and minimum target grade data that each pupil has been set in the context of reaching their full potential. Other professional judgements through diagnostic and formative assessment will reshape your initial strategies over time, but this data should remain central to the differentiation that is employed for teaching groups

Modifications and adjustments can then be made in the following areas:-

- learning tasks and activities
- teaching and learning methodologies.

These modifications are made at the short term stage where the decisions about differentiation are informed by assessment.

MidYIS data should be used by teachers to inform their pedagogic approaches to different pupils. The data held centrally includes MidYIS scores ranked by total as well as those pupils who exhibit significant differences between vocabulary and non-verbal skills.

### **This might be achieved:**

#### **a. by TASK:**

Because pupils work in a variety of ways with their different strength and aptitudes, a range of tasks spanning the spectrum of abilities can be an effective way of differentiating.

#### **b. by RESOURCE:**

Activities which involve resources available to extend the more able as well as support the lower achiever. It means changing the resources by which pupils learn to meet their individual needs.

#### **c. by RESPONSE:**

The response of the pupil is a form by which differentiation can be achieved. This is essential in cases where differentiation by outcome is planned as the teacher's

written or spoken response will vary from pupil to pupil. Marking of a pupil's work is an important medium for differentiation by response and therefore should be diagnostic as far as possible.

**d. by OUTCOME:**

Pupils working on a common un-differentiated task will inevitably produce different outcomes to the task set, as long as the task is not too closed. These differentiated outcomes could then be used to assess and then inform planning for differentiation in another way (task, resource, group, support).

**e. by SUPPORT:**

The differing needs of pupils will inevitably mean that some need greater support than others. There are a number of strategies that can provide that support. This may take the form of referring the pupil to the Learning Support Teacher after appropriate consultation.

These strategies adapt teaching to the potential and needs of each individual, from the gifted and talented to those who may need added support.

## **5. Assessment used formatively to involve pupils in their learning**

The key focus of assessment in teaching and learning must be to enable our pupils to be continually aware of where they are now in their learning, where they can or need to get to and, most importantly, how to get there.

**This might be achieved through:**

- academic department having a policy on marking, assessment and reporting which ensures that feedback is provided to teachers and pupils about progress in order to support future learning and inform necessary adjustments to teaching.
- sharing learning objectives with pupils.

- sharing assessment criteria with pupils very early on in tasks, in a way which is easy for them to understand and is transparent for all ( a basic procedure in Assessment for Learning strategies)
- recognising the standards to aim for by showing pupils exemplars of work (presumably contained in a file of model answers)
- providing varied and effective feedback and tips for improvement for pupils to help them realise their potential by making them active partners in their own learning.
- developing pupils' questioning skills.
- developing pupils' self and peer assessment.
- promoting confidence among learners and being aware of their most effective learning styles.
- teaching in such a way as to that enable pupils to be involved in assessing and monitoring their own achievements.
- ensuring that assessment yields information that is useful in helping to improve teaching and learning that occurs by planning work with appropriate pace and challenge.
- ensuring that assessment yields information that is useful in helping to improve the pupils' learning by helping pupils to understand how they learn best, and how well they have learned in a particular context.

Assessment is of prime importance to staff to inform their future planning and activity with classes. Equally it has a profound influence on pupil motivation and self-esteem. Therefore it must show consideration and be both constructive and sensitive. Also our ability to share this information with parents effectively is a key to pupils being supported as well as possible at home.

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