

Teaching & Learning Policy

Smith's Wood Academy

Part of Fairfax Multi-Academy Trust

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“Every teacher needs to improve, not because they are not good enough, but because they can be even better” – Dylan William

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1. Teaching and Learning Policy

Teaching and Learning is at the centre of everything that we do. The success of our students is determined by the quality of teaching they receive. Our role is to guide, form and facilitate student learning, so that progress is enabled for all students.

The content of this policy is designed to help staff promote excellent learning and progress. The principles covered in this policy have the potential to increase the life chances of our students by raising the quality of the education we provide; the principles have the potential to improve students' engagement, enjoyment, achievement, relationships and behaviour in school. We want all of our students to have high aspirations and understand that the progress they make directly impacts on their life opportunities. It is crucial that we prepare our students to be successful in a rapidly changing world. The policy will inform parents in terms of provision for their children and it will support staff in finding professional fulfilment in their work.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other Smith's Academy policies, particularly, SEND, Assessment and Behaviour Management.

Section 1: Plan and teach well-structured lessons to enable 'outstanding' progress

All lessons delivered at Smith's Wood Academy are planned, and taught in line with the Teaching for Excellence model.

1.1 Teaching for Excellence model.

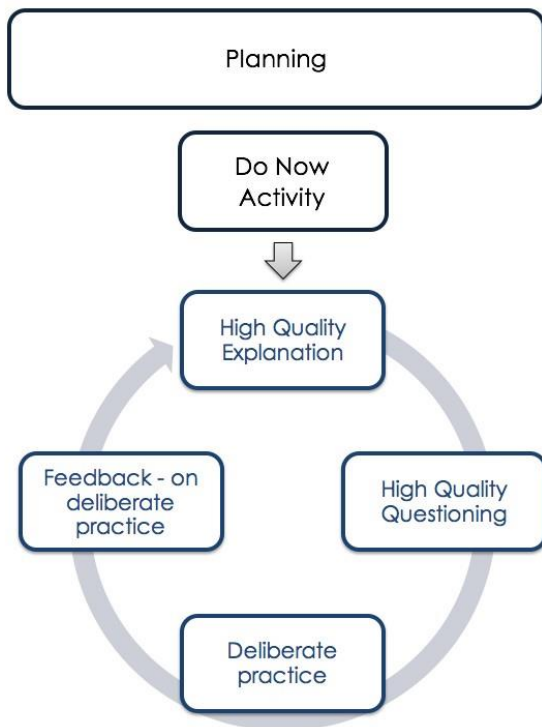
The Mastery approach is based on 6 key principles;

- Explanation
- Deliberate practice
- Modelling
- Questioning
- High quality feedback
- High expectations

Every teacher, in every classroom will be required to live and breathe this approach. Senior Leaders and Leading Practitioners will be expected to be Ambassadors of Excellence.

Ultimately, all teachers will need to be Ambassadors of Excellence in the classroom – every day, every lesson.

1.2 Teaching for Excellence routines



All lesson at Smith's wood academy will follow the lesson structure cycle shown here.

All lessons will begin with a '**Do Now Activity**' (DNA). This will aim to recap prior knowledge with the sole purpose of improving retrieval of old information by using factual recall questions.

Teachers will then lead the class through a high quality explanation. Following explanation and an opportunity for students to make sense of the learning (questioning), students will undertake Deliberate Practice.

Feedback on all deliberate practice tasks set will be given in line with the Academy Feedback Policy.

Teachers may wish to follow this cycle, across a period of lessons, across one lesson or multiple times during a lesson. The cycle outlined in the image is the cycle of learning. Learning may therefore take place over a series of lessons if the deliberate practice task is substantial extended writing.

1.3 Further lesson routines:

Entry routine/'Threshold' (4 to start): The start of the lesson is important because it sets the tone for the rest of the lesson, allowing students to get started immediately with their learning. When entering a classroom, students will:

- be greeted by the teacher at the classroom door
- enter the classroom standing behind their chair taking out their equipment
- sit down when instructed in silence
- begin the DNA
- work independently on the DNA, without talking or asking the teacher a question

DNA: Staff plan no more than 10 factual recall questions based on prior learning for the 'Do-Now Activity' (DNA) which ensures a prompt, purposeful start to the lesson. This may take the form of questions displayed on the board or handed to students. A DNA should:

- be in the same place every day so it becomes a habit for all your students

- be completed without any direction from you, discussion with their classmates or the use of other materials
- take 5-10 minutes to complete and should require putting pen to paper
- Review a prior learning (Daily Recap)

Exit routine (4 to finish): An orderly and well managed exit routine from lessons is as important as the entry to the lesson. A consistent and efficient exit routine supports the positive culture and ethos of the college and ensures that students are sent on to their following lesson in an orderly fashion and in the right mindset to engage with the entry routine there. The key features of an exit routine:

- the teacher moves to the door to manage the dismissal
- students stand behind their chairs in silence
- books and resources are collected as per an established classroom routine (this may differ between classes)
- teacher positively dismisses the students ensuring that they are calmly sent on their way to the next lesson.

1.4 Teaching for Excellence structure detail:

All lessons at Smith's Wood Academy are expected to be planned with the end of mind. Each lesson should also form part of a sequence of lessons which are driven towards an assessment.

As mentioned previously Lessons at Smith's Wood Academy should include evidence of a DNA, while a sequence of Explanation, Making sense, Deliberate Practice and Feedback (a multiple and inter-changeable number of this sequence is acceptable) should also be used.

All lessons are driven towards achieving an overall lesson objective which is shared with the students. Beneath the surface of this objective sits the learning outcomes which act as the success criteria against which the student's success will be measured. You can test the rigor of your learning objectives against the 4M's (Measurable, Made First, Most Important and Manageable – See TLAC 2.0 Technique 17).

This lesson structure: 'Explanation' refers to delivering key information or modelling and explaining the process you want your students to learn. During 'Making sense', you gradually allow students to process the information. This can be done through questioning and by completing examples with less assistance on more of the task – from 'I do; you help' to 'you do; I help.' Finally, in the 'Deliberate Practice' step, you provide students the opportunity to practice on their own, giving them multiple opportunities and situations of increasing difficulty.

Key features of an 'Explanation' segment:

- The teacher is explicit and clear about what students are expected to have achieved by the end of the lesson.
- The teacher includes both modelling (showing how to do something e.g. an annotated model of high quality exemplar work) and explanation (telling how to do something).
- Turn the information to be learned into a challenging problem to be solved.
- Use this as an opportunity to address misconceptions which students should avoid.

Key features of a 'Making sense' segment:

- The goal of 'Making sense' is to push more and more of the cognitive work onto the students. Feigned ignorance – “Did I get that right?”, “I'm unsure where do go next” as well as unbundling big questions into several can be useful.
- Be deliberate in drawing attention to particular learning processes by probing students to justify rationale behind the method used to solve a problem.
- Students should be encouraged to participate in Structured Talk using methods such as 'turn and talk' or 'think, pair, share’

Key features of a 'Deliberate Practice' segment:

- The purpose of the 'Deliberate Practice' segment is for students to demonstrate their learning.
- During this time, the teacher is actively involved and circulates the classroom, zoning in on students who the teacher pre-empted as struggling with the task, but also assessing students understanding of the concept and activity.
- Individual, unique misconceptions can be addressed discretely, however if the teacher recognises a number of students are struggling with a similar concept, the teacher stops the activity to celebrate the error and address the misconception positively.
- Provide time to redraft or edit work to an excellent standard.
- Positively reinforce the behaviours that you wish to promote.
- Have stretch activities available for students who are ready for the next level.

1.5 Medium term planning

Planning should always start with the end in mind. For medium term planning, the 'end' is the summative assessment students are working towards. This will either be a GCSE examination or an end of term / end of year summative assessment. This will be set out in the departments 5 year curriculum plan.

All unit of work will be supported by a Knowledge Organiser specifically developed for that unit. These will be shared with students.

It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to ensure that the 5 year curriculum plan is up to date, and that Knowledge Organisers are prepared in advance of the teaching cycle, although other teachers may contribute to the production of these plans. These documents will then serve as a starting point for all planning activities.

Section 2: Feedback – assessment of student work

For information about the Academy's expectations surrounding feedback please see the Feedback Policy.

Section 3: Monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning

3.1 All teachers will:

- Be observed regularly through a programme of 'Developmental Drop-ins (DDI's)

Formal lesson observations, Developmental Drop-ins (DDI's), book looks and assessment data will be used to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and quality of teaching and learning at Smith's Wood Academy.

Classroom Teachers are responsible for the progress of the pupils in their classes and for self-evaluating their own professional development

This is achieved by:

- self-evaluation of their subject knowledge and understanding of educational initiatives as supported by INSET training
- self-evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of their own teaching and their classroom management;
- monitoring pupil progress to ensure they achieve well against prior rates of progress and similar groups nationally;
- self-evaluation of their contribution to the policies and aspirations of the school;
- all classroom teachers will self assess and plan for improvement against the Teachers' Standards.

Section 4: Homework

For information regarding the Academy's approach to homework, please refer to Study Policy

Section 5: Coaching

Those staff identified as failing to meet our expectations with lesson delivery will be offered support through the Academy's coaching programme. Coaching for Excellence. For information regarding the coaching programme please refer to Instructional Leadership Rubric.