



## PLYMOUTH HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

**POLICY: TEACHING AND LEARNING**  
(including Assessment & Monitoring, and Reporting to Parents)

**SLT LINK MEMBER: Mary Utton**

**GOVERNORS SUB COMMITTEE: T & L**

This policy was adopted: MARCH 2014

This policy will be reviewed: MARCH 2016

Statutory Policy: NO

Source: School

## Teaching and Learning Policy and Practice

*“The learning school is not so much a separate place .....  
as a meeting ground for learning – dedicated to the idea that all  
those involved with it, individually and together, will be continually  
enhancing and expanding their awareness and capabilities.”*

(Peter Senge, 2000)

### Introduction

**This is the most important of all our policy documents. At the centre of the policy is a commitment to personalising learning. Our aim is to tailor learning to meet the needs, interests and aptitudes of every single student and improve the quality and equity of their provision.**

**The policy will be revised regularly to take account of the current best pedagogy and practice.**

Plymouth High School is an educationally inclusive school. The school values achievement, provides opportunity and promotes responsibility. We have high expectations of everyone within the school as both learners and teachers. We have mutual respect for each other. The success of students, whatever their ability to succeed, derives from the high quality of the teaching and non-teaching staff, the importance placed by the school on learning, teaching and achievement, and a sound knowledge and understanding of each child’s life experiences and needs. Real lasting change only comes from what teachers and those who assist teachers do consistently in classrooms and other learning areas in school and from the positive values and attitudes students adopt towards learning. We appreciate that the experience may differ slightly dependent on the subject and the Key Stage.

## Key learning principles

- Students experience enjoyment in learning.
- The school has high expectations of all learners.
- Low expectations and low aspirations are challenged.
- Every student has the ability to achieve and the right to be successful. With this right comes the responsibility of each student to behave appropriately so that their own and others' learning can take place.
- Every teacher has the right to teach. With this comes the responsibility to create a positive atmosphere conducive to good learning and to be firm but fair in their dealings with all students.
- Consistent adherence by all to the principles defined above leads to the mutual respect that makes for the most effective learning.
- There is no limit to the levels of achievement that can be attained – learning will be varied enough to enable learners to develop their own range of 'intelligences' or abilities.
- It is the responsibility of all members of staff to provide learning experiences so that all students are able to progress in their learning to greater achievement.
- Each student is kept informed about academic progress and given advice on how to improve performance.
- Every person in the school plays their part and in working as a whole we are made stronger thus to ensure the consistency of experience which is fundamental for success.
- SEN/Inclusion/Most Able/Small Groups will be identified and strategies devised to enable all students with special needs to fulfil their potential.

At PHSG each member of our community is both a learner and a teacher. All members of staff are leaders in learning and everyone, whatever their role, has a responsibility to support students in their learning. Some members of staff (Heads of Department, Key Stage Co-ordinators, Director of Learning; Director of Post 16 Studies, ASTs) have particular responsibilities. (Please refer to 'Roles and Responsibilities in the Staffing Structure document.)

## HOW WE ACHIEVE OUR AIMS

- Lessons are planned and structured to promote learning
- Learning Objectives and expected outcomes are shared with pupils in all lessons
- Activities are varied, purposeful, and matched to pupils' needs
- Achievement is recognised, rewarded, and celebrated
- Under-achievement is identified and a range of strategies employed to raise attainment
- The school/classroom environment supports good learning
- The quality of teaching is continuously monitored, evaluated, and reviewed
- Teaching staff are provided with opportunities to ensure they are developing their practice and updating their skills

### Marking and Assessment

Rationale:

Plymouth High School believes the main purpose of marking and assessment is to enable each student to realise their potential by knowing where they are in their learning and knowing how they can make further progress. With this knowledge they become reflective learners, able to close the gap between what they are currently achieving and what they are capable of achieving.

While we recognise the diverse nature of everyday marking within and between both academic disciplines and different age groups, we also recognise the academic research of Professors Williams and Black regarding Formative Assessment and 'constructive comments only marking'.

**Our expectation is that most everyday work will not be graded using letters or percentages - only constructive, formative comments should be written on pupils' work, including how they can improve.** The suggested approach is to give two positive comments and one suggestion for improvement: eg What Went Well (WWW)/Even Better If (EBI). Our aim is to ensure good practice in Marking and Assessment throughout the school.

## HOW WE ACHIEVE OUR AIM

- Heads of Department produce a Marking and Assessment Policy to ensure consistency of practice, including frequency of marking, across the whole department
- Each Department has a system best suited to its curriculum for tracking and recording the quality of pupils' work
- Pupils' work is acknowledged by teachers, and marking, verbal or written, is given to pupils, as soon as possible after completion of the piece of work
- Strategies to improve Literacy, including spelling, punctuation, and grammar (SPAG), are employed regularly in all pupils' work, using common annotation
- Teaching staff explain to pupils how their achievement, skills, knowledge, and understanding are measured against agreed criteria
- SLT provides accurate and regular information for staff, pupils, parents, and governors on how pupils' attainment compares with similar schools locally and nationally, and with LA set targets
- Teaching staff provide an accurate representations of their pupils' achievement for the purposes of individual target-setting and to inform whole school analysis of student progress
- PHSG celebrates pupils' academic success and avoids underachievement through effective pupil-tracking and subsequent support strategies

### Effective marking and assessment:

- Promotes and supports good learning
- Informs teaching and lesson planning
- Is both formative and summative
- Uses appropriate and diverse strategies
- Recognises all pupil progress and achievement
- Develops the capacity for self-assessment
- Fosters a shared involvement and responsibility between school and home/

### Assessment and Examinations

- Every teacher must take significant care to read and understand examination board specifications
- Where there is concern over interpretation of the requirements, advice should be sought from the examination board

- Members of Senior Leadership Team will sample practice in relation to the preparation of students for public examinations
- Where a subject leader wishes to take a new specification, the decision must be reviewed with the link member of SLT and the Examinations Officer.

### **Reporting to Parents/Carers**

**Schools communicate with parents / carers about the curriculum and the achievements of their children using the following forms:**

- **Data reports**
- **Written reports**
- **Subject Parents' Evening**
- **E-mails**
- **Informal discussion**
- **Telephone calls home and interviews**
- **Written comments on pieces of work which are taken home**
- **Departmental letters sent home for good work**
- **Commendations**
- **Student Planner**

We are also investigating the use of text messages and an e-portal to increase the efficiency of this communication.

### **Reporting system**

At three points in the year parents receive a report to parents on their child's progress. All of these reports contain data from subject teachers and one is a full written report. At all Key Stages the data indicates three measures:

- Target grade or level
- Predicted grade or level of the student continues working to the same standard.
- Attitude to learning on a 1-5 scale

In addition the teacher gives a numeric indicator for Attitude to Learning:

1. A student who is very highly motivated and very committed
2. A student who is well motivated and committed
3. A student who is committed and working at the standard expected by the school
4. A student who is not working at the standard expected by the school

5. A student who is poorly motivated and underachieving requiring intervention and improvement (that is, serious cause for concern).

At Key Stage 4 and 5 the teacher indicates the Attitude to Learning along with the GCSE or A Level grade the student is expected to achieve if they continue to work to the same standard. The final report provides not only the information outlined above but also contains a full written report with targets from each subject teacher.

The school will review its practices for communicating with parents / carers in light of investigating changes to on-line reporting and the use of Internet access which may enable parents to review their child's progress in 'real time'.

### Tutoring

It is the responsibility of the Form Tutor to meet with each of their tutees on a regular basis to review the progress of each student against their individual targets and set goals for improvement. The data entered by teaching staff at each of the Data Assessment entry points in the school year is available to the Tutor to help inform the discussion. Other information from HOKS, SIMS, Attendance Officer, Support Base and TAC meetings should be used as appropriate.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

- The Head of Department or teacher i/c a Key Stage is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the application of this policy within their subject area
- Key Stage Co-ordinators and Deputy Headteacher will monitor and evaluate the policy across their key stage and report their findings to the relevant Line Manager
- The quality of the reports is monitored by Heads of Department, Tutors and SLT/HOKS

15 May 2014