

Quality First Teaching and Learning Policy



RENAISSANCE EDUCATION
Specialist Therapeutic Schools



Approved by:	Jay Rawlings	Date: October 2024
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Aims

This policy aims to:

- Inform the process of quality of teaching and learning activities at Maple House School
- Outline the protocols for the improvement and development of the quality of teaching and learning at MHS

Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on the following advice/legislation:

Independent School Standards

Scope

This policy is for all teaching staff at Renaissance Education.

Guiding Principles for Teaching and Learning

1. **Accountability** – we are morally responsible for the progress of students and everything we do should support and impact on this
2. **Hardworking** – We ensure we are all clear on what excellent teaching looks like and hold ourselves and others accountable to this in a transparent and supportive manner
3. **Consistency** – the power of the team. We constantly look for opportunities to collaborate with others and welcome opportunities to see and share best practice
4. **Expertise** - We embrace feedback, finding out not only what we do well and can share with others, but what we need to work on
5. **Action** - We act on feedback and encourage colleagues to support us in reviewing how we are having impact on our student's progress. We take risks and try things out knowing that we will not be held accountable for individual moments of unsuccessful teaching and learning

Roles and responsibilities

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team will be responsible for ensuring this policy is followed and that the quality of teaching and learning at Renaissance Education continually improves.

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team will:

- Plan lesson observations, Book and Planning Scrutiny checks and learning walks in line with this policy.
- Provide feedback following the above activities in a supportive and development focussed manner.

Staff will:

- Ensure they follow this and related policies to ensure teaching and learning is of high quality at Renaissance Education.
- Actively engage in feedback and support from SLT regarding the quality of teaching and learning at Renaissance Education.

Book and Planning Scrutiny

Principles

- Single Book and Planning Scrutiny will not be used for performance management
- Book and Planning Scrutiny may be used in conjunction with the performance management process where, over the course of a year, issues have not been addressed effectively
- The school promotes a collegiate and collaborative approach to both marking and planning as part of structured professional development time in the school calendar. This will provide opportunity for ongoing sharing of best practice, department review and developmental guidance of books that will sit alongside quality assurance procedures
- The school marking policy should be used by all staff to ensure that student books/folders evidence high expectations around student work, diagnostic feedback from staff and student response that evidences clear and consistent progress
- Staff will not have a choice of which books will be sampled during work scrutiny. This will be the responsibility of the Deputy Head teacher.

Protocols

- There will be 3 Book and Planning Scrutiny exercises that will be completed as part of quality assurance in the academic year
- The school calendar will give transparency; specifying the week of Book and Planning Scrutiny and focus area in line with school priorities (implementation of whole school marking policy, standards and challenge and pupil response to feedback)
- Staff will be given 5 working days - notice of the focus of Book and Planning Scrutiny (they will not receive the names of the students)
- The person(s) conducting the Book and Planning Scrutiny exercise will ensure that an equal number of books are requested from each teacher (if they teach the requested focus group).
- Each teacher will be emailed with a list of either students, class or school target group that will be the focus for Book and Planning Scrutiny. This email should be sent out by 9am on the day of a sample request
- When a teacher receives a sample request to provide books, they should ensure that the sample is passed to the member of staff who requested the sample by lunch time on the same day, unless the book is being used by the teacher in the afternoon. In this instance, the book may be passed to the reviewer by 3.30pm on the day of request
- The person conducting the Book and Planning Scrutiny should look to sample the work and pass books back to staff within 48 hours of receiving the book/work
- In some cases, to aid whole school professional development, Book and Planning Scrutiny will be completed as a staff team
- The school Book and Planning Scrutiny proforma should be used for all calendared quality assurance of students work

Feedback

- Staff have the option of requesting verbal feedback in addition to written feedback of books using the Book and Planning Scrutiny feedback proforma
- The **time and date** of the feedback, if wanted, should be **agreed** ideally before the Book and Planning Scrutiny exercise, but can be requested after
- Should any issue be raised by staff during the process, this should be raised with the Head teacher

Recording the Information

- Book and Planning Scrutiny strengths and opportunities for development will be recorded centrally within school data collection using an Evaluation Report (the individual feedback will be anonymised before being electronically saved)
- All published feedback will not be staff specific, but rather an overview of school strengths and progress towards the SDP which will be used as part of school quality assurance

Concerns

- Should any issues arise during the course of the year, and are not addressed, this will be raised within the performance management process
- If concerns are raised of a disciplinary, health and safety or safeguarding nature the staff member completing the work scrutiny should seek advice from the Head teacher/ Designated Safeguarding Lead

Learning Walks

Principles

- All Learning walks will not be used as part of performance management in line with union guidance
- All Learning walks will be completed by at least one member of staff with direct lines of accountability. There should be no more than two people
- Learning walks should not disrupt the flow of teaching and learning in a class and so, student voice will not be gathered in a learning walk
- The learning walk is conducted to provide evidence of:
 - The learning across the School
 - How all staff are evidencing strengths and addressing opportunities for development
 - How high quality teaching and learning impacts on good/outstanding student progress

Protocols

- 3 learning walks will be completed as part of the calendared quality assurance. The school calendar will give transparency of the week of a learning walk and focus area in line with school priorities (e.g. reading, adaptive teaching, British Values)
- The learning walk calendar date may change if deemed appropriate by the Head Teacher
- All Learning Walks will last no more than 15 minutes in each classroom.
- During the learning walks access to student books and any additional relevant evidence should be made available
- The person completing the learning walk will be 'looking at' strengths and opportunities for development with a **focus on student learning**
- Any work sampling should be used to establish 'typicality' in a learning walk
- An individual conducting the learning walk may utilise any evidence at their disposal during the learning walk, including any books/folders available, planners and wall displays
- The observer should record all observations on to the schools Learning Walk proforma. This document will be given to the teacher and/or discussed during the feedback session
- The Learning Walk proforma will provide qualitative responses to what was seen during the class visit, and also quantitative feedback as to whether specific expectations of teaching and learning, in line with school priorities and teachers' standards where met

Feedback

- Staff will receive verbal and written feedback of learning walks
- The **time and date** of the feedback, if wanted, should be **agreed** ideally before the learning walk, but can be requested after
- The person who conducted the learning walk should feedback their observations using the evidence on the learning walk proforma
- Written feedback will use the school learning walk proforma and clearly state strengths seen and opportunities for development

Recording the Information

- Learning walk strengths and opportunities for development will be recorded centrally within school data collection.
- All published feedback will not be staff specific, but rather an overview of school strengths and progress towards the SDP which will be used as part of school quality assurance

Concerns

- If concerns are raised of a Health and Safety or safeguarding nature the observer should seek advice from the Head teacher/ Designated Safeguarding Lead

Lesson Observations

Protocols

All lesson observations will last 20 – 45 minutes

There will be a maximum total of three observations per year. Under no circumstances shall the total time occupied by all observations exceed three hours per year and the focus and timing must be agreed prior to observation.

- This is to provide a consistency across the school and fairness of approach
- The purpose of these observations is to go deeper to look at 'typicality', which involves far more than 'judging' progress. As a result, more time needs to be spent observing the lesson, talking to students and sampling books to gain an accurate picture of what goes on 'day in, day out'

Staff may nominate the class

- The teacher can pick the class that they wish to be observed with. The time/date will be negotiable to avoid disruption to lessons
- The lesson focus may be agreed in advance based on performance management objectives

Notice

- All staff will be given 5 working days-notice of an observation and be told the exact date, time and lesson in which they will be observed

During the observation

- Lesson plans are optional, however, the teacher should look to have data available along with access to class books, assessments and other supporting evidence
- The observer will be looking at teaching and learning rather than 'for' a particular pedagogy or aspect of teaching in a performance management observation
- From observations the strengths from teaching seen and opportunities for development will be identified
- The observation will look at 'typicality' as part of its focus (to what extent have routines, interactions and techniques been embedded into routine practice) and its impact on learning
- Observers will be required to look at other sources of evidence when establishing what is 'typical' such as student feedback, Book and Planning Scrutiny and any other relevant information
- The observer should also use the observation as a source of evidence against the teacher standards

Recording information

- The observer should record all actions and related impact on the schools 'Lesson Observation' proforma. This document will be discussed during the feedback session
- The outcome of the lesson observation should be recorded and submitted to the reviewer after verbal feedback

Feedback

- The reviewee is entitled to verbal feedback within 24 hours where possible. Any issue with doing this must be highlighted to the appraisee before an observation
- The time and date of the feedback session should be agreed before an observation
- Feedback should focus on reviewee 'reflection'; strengths and opportunities for development
- No graded judgement will be given to the observation
- Opportunities for development should be discussed and agreed on and the observer should provide clear advice and strategies for development both verbally and in written feedback
- Written feedback will be provided within five working days of the observation taking place.
- Should any issue be raised by staff during the process, this should be raised with the Head teacher

Concerns

- If evidence emerges about the reviewee's teaching performance which gives rise to concern during the observation, further classroom observations may be arranged subject to a revision meeting
- A reviewee is entitled to request a second observation should they feel their observation did not reflect 'typicality' of teaching and learning
- If concerns are raised of a disciplinary, Health and safety or safeguarding nature the observer should seek advice from the Head teacher/ Designated Safeguarding Lead

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be updated every 2 years by the Headteacher.

Ofsted criteria

FOCUS AREA	EXCEPTIONAL/STRONG STANDARD	EXPECTED	REQUIRES ATTENTION	NEEDS FURTHER IMPROVEMENT
Intent	'Good' criteria are consistently and securely met The teacher demonstrates a firm and common understanding of the school's curriculum intent Work given to pupils over time matches the aims of the curriculum Work is coherently sequenced so that pupils accumulate sufficient knowledge and understanding and skills to secure future learning	Sequences of learning are coherently planned to build cumulative knowledge Sequence of learning meets the needs of disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND The learning planned is ambitious for all pupils including disadvantaged pupils and those with additional needs or disabilities	Any aspect that does not meet the criteria for 'good' will 'require improvement'	There is little evidence of structure and coherence in the sequence of work Sequence of learning is jumbled and does not build knowledge, skills or understanding
Subject knowledge and understanding	'Good' criteria are consistently and securely met	The teacher demonstrates good subject knowledge (i.e. they understand the component knowledge required, and they know how to check for common misconceptions and how to correct them) Subject matter is presented clearly, promoting appropriate discussion	Any aspect that does not meet the criteria for 'good' will 'require improvement'	Pupils' experiences in the lesson contribute weakly to their learning

		Teachers make sure that their own speaking, listening, reading and writing of English support pupils' development of language		
Assessment and feedback	'Good' criteria are consistently and securely met	Pupils' understanding is checked systematically Misconceptions are accurately identified Clear, direct feedback is provided Teaching is adapted as necessary to provide for the learning needs within the group Information from assessments is used well, to check understanding and inform teaching	Any aspect that does not meet the criteria for 'good' will 'require improvement'	Pupils' experiences in the lesson contribute weakly to their learning

Use of resources	'Good' criteria are consistently and securely met	Pupils can remember the necessary prior learning in order to integrate the current learning Resources used clearly support the accumulation of knowledge and skills in an ambitious curriculum Work given to pupils is demanding and supports their learning Remote learning is well integrated into the programme of study and well designed to support pupils' learning Reading and literacy are developed in a manner consistent with the school's policies	Any aspect that does not meet the criteria for 'good' will 'require improvement'	Pupils' experiences in the lesson contribute weakly to their learning
Impact	'Good' criteria are consistently and securely being met Pupils consistently achieve highly, particularly the most disadvantaged	Pupils develop detailed knowledge and skills over time. As a result, they achieve well Pupils with SEND achieve the best possible outcomes	Any aspect that does not meet the criteria for 'good' will 'require improvement'	Pupils cannot communicate their learning appropriately The progress of disadvantaged pupils is well below that of other pupils Pupils with SEND do not

	Pupils with SEND achieve particularly well Pupils' work is consistently of high quality	Pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils are fully included in the curriculum Pupils are able to communicate their learning appropriately: verbally, in writing and using mathematical forms where appropriate		achieve as well as they should. Expectations are low and their needs are not met
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