

St. Joseph's Academy

Policy No.1

Learning and Teaching

Updated September 2025



Rationale

St. Joseph's Academy believes that each pupil has the right to the highest quality learning experience in every classroom and teaching area.

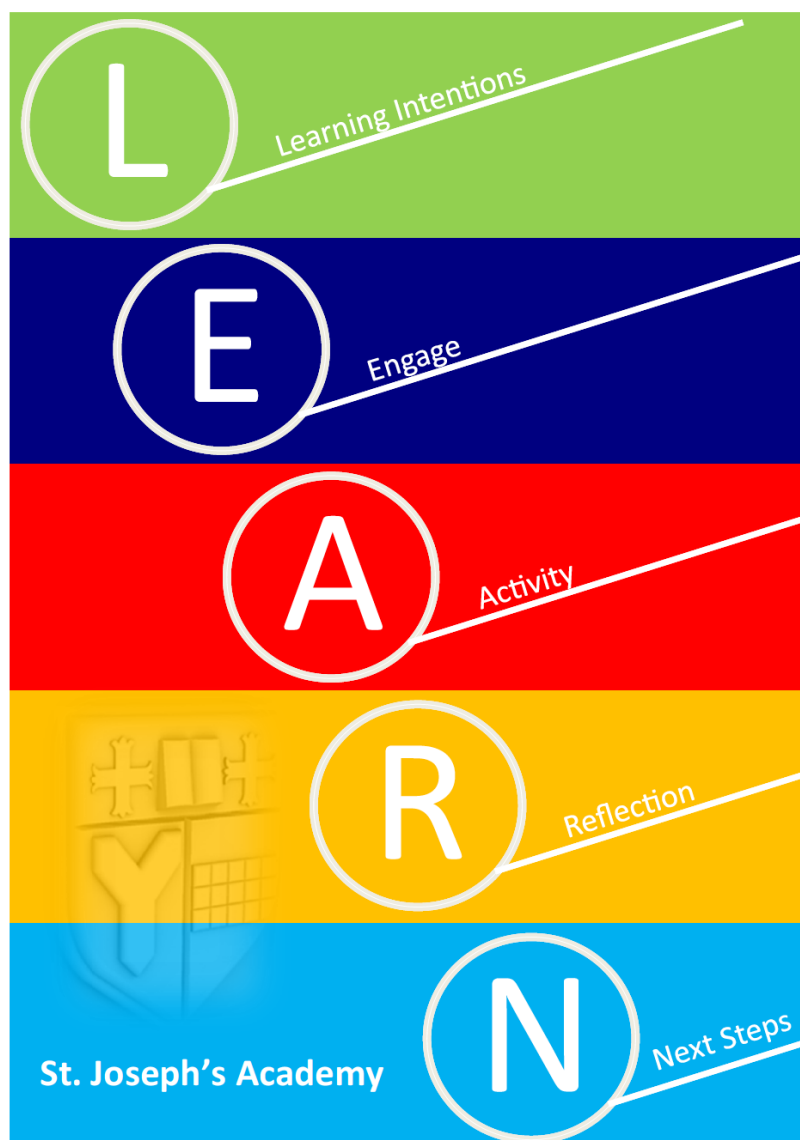
Aim

Our aim is to ensure consistency, not uniformity, across St Joseph's and to ensure that our practice reflects the most up to date educational research and pedagogy. The LEARN model (see below) provides a framework for practitioners across St Joseph's to deliver high quality learning and teaching and also for staff, pupils and parents/carers to self-evaluate the quality of learning and teaching.

Policy in Practice

Learning and Teaching in St Joseph's Academy

Across St Joseph's Academy we have a shared lesson framework to provide consistency in our learning and teaching and to ensure the learning experience of our young people is engaging and effective. This also helps practitioners plan and evaluate learning across the school. This format is based on the acronym LEARN.



Illustrations of the LEARN framework

Within LEARN, features of effective learning and teaching could include, but are not limited to:

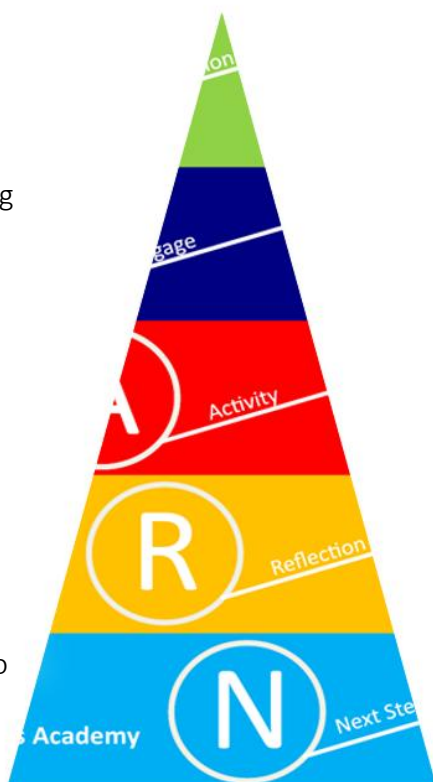
L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning intentions and success criteria are shared at the beginning of each lesson and revisited at the end of the lesson to assess achievement/progress. • Learning intentions should define what is to be learned during a lesson • Success Criteria should be outcome oriented, and define how pupils will know that they have overtaken the learning intention(s) • Success criteria should be used as the basis for formative assessment, as a signpost during lessons and to help identify the need for differentiation • Reference to Responsibility of All areas (Literacy, Numeracy, Health and Wellbeing) • Links to Career Management Skills Framework where relevant
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conventions and routines are well utilised to create a purposeful learning environment • Positive relationships with young people are evident and based upon our shared school values and mutual respect • Starter tasks are used to engage interest, either by way of recap or to introduce a new topic • Teachers use creative approaches to engage young people in their learning • Our explanations and instructions are clear • Pupils have opportunities to lead learning • Learners exercise choice in their learning
A	<p>Lessons at St Joseph's should demonstrate a range of learning activities such as;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active learning • Co-operative learning • Assessment is for Learning techniques • Use of Digital Learning • Paired tasks/ Group tasks/ Individual Tasks • Discussion/ Debate • Appropriate differentiation should be evident • An appropriate level of pace and challenge should be evident
R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plenary tasks • Effective Questioning • Pupils are enabled to use Higher Order Thinking Skills • Assessment is for Learning techniques • Pupils receive feedback on learning and what they need to do next to make progress • Reference to whole school Feedback Strategy • Teacher Assessment/ Self-assessment/ Peer-assessment of lesson aims
N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target setting for future learning • Learner conversations • Discussion of next steps in learning – whole class/group/ individual • Discussion of wider context of learning

Self-Evaluation

Our LEARN Model sits alongside a supportive and robust self-evaluation process to allow us to regularly evaluate the quality of learning and teaching at St Joseph's Academy. At all levels, self-evaluation and quality assurance of learning and teaching should be based on the LEARN model. Departments are wholly committed to using self-evaluation to bring about improvement. In line with the school's Self Evaluation approaches, all departments undertake core self-evaluation tasks as detailed on Departmental Quality Assurance calendars. Our self-evaluation activities include, but are not limited to:

Information and Data

Assessments and measuring progress
Target Setting and Learner Conversations
Tracking Data & interventions
SQA Results
INSIGHT Data
SNSA Data
Moderation activities
ACEL and SNSA Data
Learner Participation Data
Merits & Demerits linked to school values



Views of Stakeholders

Learner Conversations
Pupil Voice Questionnaires and Surveys
Staff & partner agency surveys
Pupil Focus Groups
Parent/ Carer Focus Groups
Parent Council
Staff Meetings
Partnership agency/
Community Partner Focus Groups

Direct Observations

Lesson observations (departments)
Peer observations
SLT/ PT observations
Learning visits
NQT QA Programme
In House CLPL Programme

A more detailed programme of our self-evaluation activities related to learning & teaching are available on departmental Quality Assurance Calendars.

School Improvement Priorities

In order to maximize the impact of our self-evaluation activity related to learning & teaching, and to mirror the school improvement plan, we have a whole school focus in place for learning & teaching. This allows for learning observations and quality assurance visits (SLT) to have a sustained focus, and for quality assurance activity to be purposeful and impactful.

Our information & data, direct observations and views of stakeholders inform future areas for development in learning & teaching.

Session	Whole School Learning & Teaching focus	Rationale
2022/23 2023/24 2024/25	Meeting Learners' Needs/ Differentiation	Education Scotland Inspection 2019 Growing number of young people with ASN Views of stakeholders – Educational Psychologists
2025/26	Pace & Challenge Effective Questioning	Departmental & whole school observations Learning Visit 2025 discussions Staff views

Classroom Assistants

Our Pupil Support Assistants are an invaluable source of guidance for those young people who require support to access elements of the curriculum.

A collaborative agreement is created between Pupil Support Assistants and relevant class teachers to ensure that young people with additional supports needs have adequate support in the classroom environment. The collaborative agreement document evidences that planning discussions have taken place between teaching staff and pupil support assistants with regards to pupils requiring support and the supports to be delivered. These are reviewed by our PT Support for Learning who line manages Pupil Support Assistants.

Staff Development

All staff are able to benefit from sharing of good practice in learning & teaching through inset and whole school meeting activities.

The school CLPL calendar has a range of activities which support the features of effective learning and teaching within the LEARN model. Our Continuous Professional Learning Calendar provides support for staff in implementing effective learning and teaching and helps to ensure staff have learning opportunities to enhance practice and knowledge for the benefit of our learners and whole school community. Our practitioners take a lead role in the delivery of CLPL workshops and welcome opportunities to learn from colleagues in a supportive, informed environment.

Relevant Professional Reading

Education Endowment Foundation (Scotland) <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/>

Wiliam, Dylan. (2018, 2nd edition). Embedded Formative Assessment, Solution Tree Press. ISBN 978-1-945349-22-5

Assessment Reform Group Papers. Available at <http://www.assessment-reform-group.org/ARIA%20English.pdf>

Black, P., Wiliam, D. (1998). Inside the Black Box. NFER Nelson

Black, P., Harrison, C., Lee, C., Marshall, B., Wiliam, D. (2003). Assessment for Learning, putting it into practice. Open University Press

The Black Box Assessment for Learning series –

Editors: Paul Black, Christine Harrison, Bethan Marshall and Dylan Wiliam including:

Marshall, B., Wiliam, D. (2006). English Inside the Black Box. GL Assessment

Hodgen, J., Wiliam, D. (2006). Maths Inside the Black Box

Black, P., Harrison, C. (2004). Science Inside the Black Box

Weeden, P., Lambert, D. (2006). Geography Inside the Black Box

Webb, M., Cox, M. (2007). ICT Inside the Black Box

Jones, J., Wiliam, D. (2008). Modern Foreign Languages Inside the Black Box

Moreland, J., Jones, A., and Barlex, D. (2008). Design & Technology Inside the Black Box

Harrison, C., and Howard, S. (2009). Inside the Primary Black Box

Clarke, P., Owens, T., and Sutton, R. (2006). Creating Independent Student Learners – A practical guide to Assessment for Learning. Portage and Main Press

Clarke, S. (2003). Enriching Feedback in the Primary Classroom. Hodder & Stoughton

Clarke, S. (2005). Formative Assessment in Action: Weaving the Elements Together. Hodder & Stoughton

Clarke, S. (2008). Active Learning through Formative assessment. Hodder & Stoughton

Clarke, S. (2005). Formative Assessment in the Secondary Classroom. Hodder & Stoughton

Dweck, C. S. (2006). Mindset – The new psychology of success. Random House

Farrell, P., Alborz, A., Howes, A. & Pearson, D. (2010). The impact of teaching assistants on improving pupils' academic achievement in mainstream schools: a review of the literature, Educational Review, 62(4) pp 435-448

Gardner, J., Harlen, W., Hayward, L., & Stobart, G. (2008). Changing Assessment Practice: process, principles and standards

Harlen, W. (2006). The Role of Teachers in the Assessment of Learning. Assessment Reform Group. Available at <http://www.assessment-reform-group.org/ASF%20booklet%20English.pdf>

Hattie, John. (2011). Visible Learning for Teachers: Maximizing Impact on Learning

Hayward, L. (2007). Curriculum, pedagogies and assessment in Scotland: the quest for social justice. 'Ah kent yir faither' Profiles of Educational Assessment Systems Worldwide in Assessment in Education Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 251–268

HMIE How Good is Our School 4, all HMIE documents available at <http://www.hmie.gov.uk>

Oxford School Improvement, Parental Engagement - How to make a real difference

Sherrington, T. (2017). The Learning Rainforest: Great Teaching in Real Classrooms

Smith, I. (2007). Asking Better Questions - A practical guide for secondary teachers Learning Unlimited

Smith, I. (2007). Making Feedback Count - A practical guide for secondary teachers Learning Unlimited

Wiliam, D. (2011). What is assessment for learning? Studies in Educational Evaluation, 37(1), 2-14

Wiliam, D. (2016). Leadership [for] Teacher Learning – Creating a Culture Where All Teachers Improve so That All Students Succeed

Important Websites for further information

www.dylanwiliam.net

www.gtcs.org.uk

www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk

www.education.gov.scot/improvement

www.shirleyclarke-education.org

www.assessment-reform-group.org.uk

www.gl-assessment.co.uk

www.assessment-reform-group.org

www.learningunlimited.co.uk

www.hmie.gov.uk

www.healthscotland.scot/media.1517/tackling-the-attainment-gap-by-preventing-and-responding-to-adverse-childhood-experiences.pdf

Further relevant professional reading can be found in the LEARN folder on StaffShare.



FIDELIS - JUSTUS - PRUDENS

St. Joseph's Academy
Lesson Observation record – teacher/ observer



Teacher	Observer	Class/ Date	Focus Area (to be agreed by teacher/ observer in advance of observation)

Class Teacher Reflection

Observer Feedback

Agreed Next Steps

Time & date of follow up observation or professional dialogue:

Points discussed:





Teacher	Observer	Class/ Date	Focus Area (to be agreed by teacher/ observer in advance of observation)

What went well?

What could improve?

Examples of good practice to highlight