



Inverclyde Academy

Learning and Teaching Policy



At Inverclyde Academy, we aim high, working together with respect, and supporting each other to achieve our potential.

Our Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy was written by staff and pupils and is underpinned by that of Inverclyde Authority.

See also:

- Curriculum Rationale
- Tracking, Assessment and Reporting Rationale
- Positive Relationships, Positive Behaviour (PRPB) policy

We provide a coherent but diverse curriculum with learners at the core; ensuring that they have challenging, relevant, personalised and flexible pathways whilst being supported by teaching and Pupil Support staff at all stages, and especially at transition points.

Pupil feedback shows that our pupils feel safe and included.

Readiness to learn

As part of our commitment to ensuring consistently high quality learning experiences across the curriculum, teachers at Inverclyde Academy consider the following when planning a lesson or series of lessons:

Planning	<p>Knowledge of pupils and their needs</p> <p>Are the tasks suitable? Is differentiation included? Is there appropriate levels of challenge for the learners? Is there personalisation or choice provided?</p> <p>Is there planned time for Learner Conversations? What interventions have been planned?</p>
Introduction	<p>Are Learning Intentions and Success Criteria the focus of the learning activities?</p> <p>Are the pupils involved in constructing SC?</p> <p>How effective are the questioning techniques?</p>
Main episode of learning	<p>Is there clarity in the instruction?</p> <p>Is the pace of learning appropriate? Are the learners' specific needs being supported?</p> <p>Is there appropriate and effective use of PSAs? Is there appropriate use of ICT?</p> <p>Are the pupils engaged in their learning?</p> <p>Is there effective use of praise?</p> <p>Is effective peer assessment being utilised?</p>
Plenary	<p>How suitable and effective is the feedback?</p> <p>Can the pupils respond to 'I can tell you', 'I can show you', 'I can teach you'?</p> <p>Do the pupils know where they are in their learning?</p> <p>Do the learners know what they need to do to improve?</p>

Teachers use a Learning Plan template which incorporates prior learning, adapting teaching for pupils in the lesson, and also post-learning planning.



A typical Inverclyde Academy lesson will:

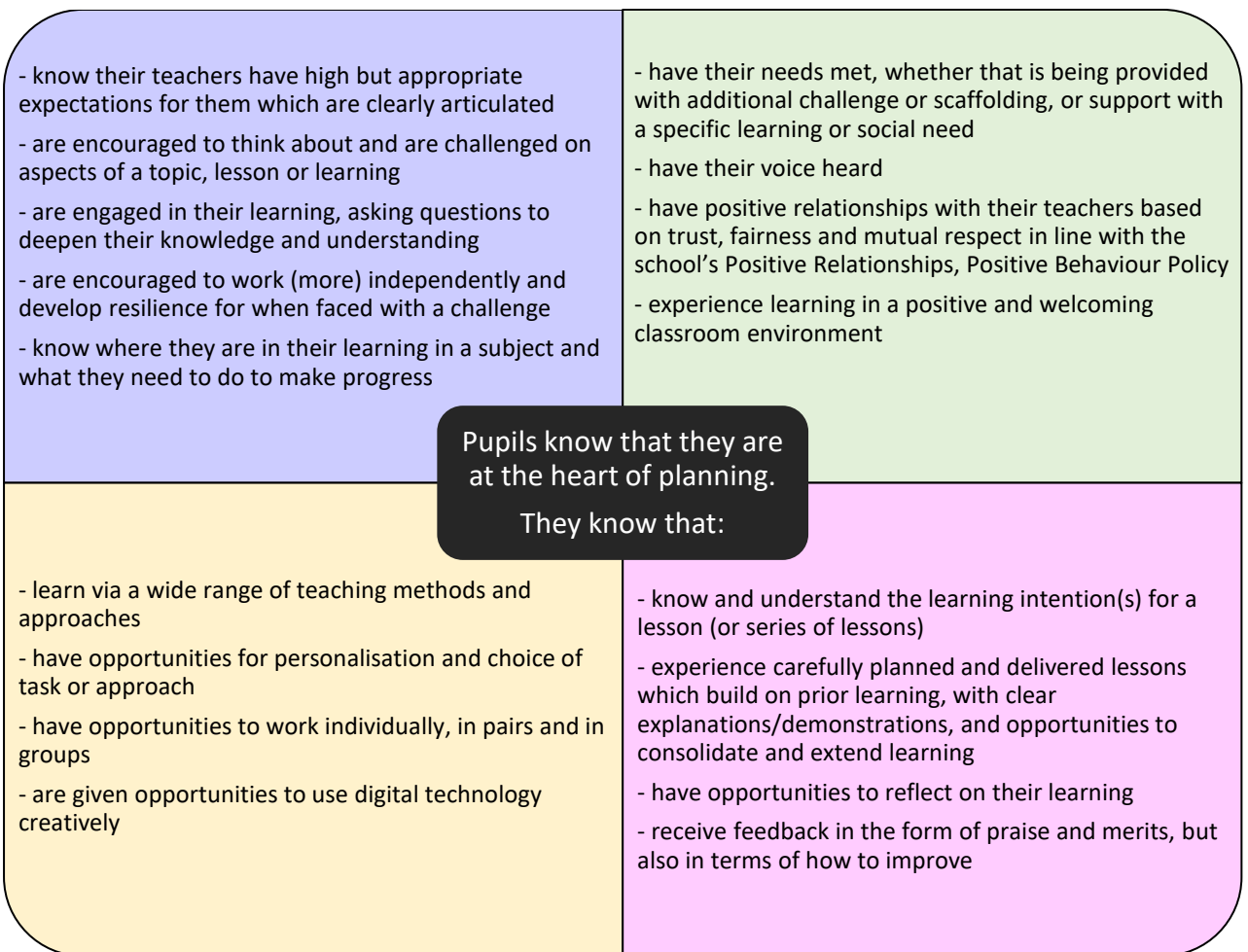
begin with a retrieval activity to recall information from their memory (e.g. a quiz, a prompt to respond to, a choice of task, a gapfill or a brain dump) to improve long-term retention and higher order thinking skills

identify or co-create learning intentions and success criteria

introduce new content; or consolidate, use, apply, or extend prior learning

end with some form of plenary designed to reflect on the learning intentions and/or success criteria, and to identify what is going well and where there are gaps, in order to inform future lessons.





All staff receive one departmental learning visit during the year. These visits support consistency within a department, identify good practice and reflect progress towards departmental improvement plan priorities.

In addition, the Senior Leadership Team conduct whole-school learning visits with a focus communicated in advance. The information gathered highlights areas of good practice which can be shared in future Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) events, provides evidence of progress in School Improvement Plan priorities, and informs future CLPL needs. The visit and follow-up discussion are centred around a Learning Visit pro forma comprising of four sections:

- learning and engagement
- quality of teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring



Assessment and Feedback

Assessment is an integral part of learning and teaching used daily to check for understanding and to inform future teaching. It is not 'just' tests and exams but is part of the body of evidence used by teachers.

Teachers are regularly gaining information about the strengths, progress and achievements (or lack of) of pupils in their classes through a range of formative and summative assessment tasks.

There are also opportunities for pupils to engage in peer assessment, giving and receiving each other feedback.

Formative assessment activities in our lessons might include low stakes quizzes, odd-one-out, sense or non-sense statements, mind-mapping, mini whiteboards.

Summative assessments are designed to evaluate learning by measuring knowledge and skills.

Pupils are given regular feedback, both during lessons and also following an assessment activity. This feedback might be verbal or written. Either way, it will highlight strengths and identify next steps to make progress. It may take the form of two stars and a wish, or 'what went well; even better if...'

Learner conversations are a vital part of the learning, assessment and feedback process. Pupils have the opportunity to reflect on their progress and current level, identify next steps, and also identify any barriers or support needs.



Moderation

Teachers undertake moderation of planning of learning, teaching and assessments throughout the school year to develop a shared understanding of standards and expectations to support their professional judgement of levels and attainment.

Robust moderation of Literacy and Numeracy across our Cluster is well-established. There are opportunities for moderation of curricular areas across the Authority each year.

Tracking & Interventions

Effective tracking identifies:

- the effectiveness of teaching approaches and resources being used
- gaps enabling teachers to plan and adapt teaching, provide targeted support
- achievements
- next steps and targets
- trends and patterns at class, year group or subject level

Reporting

All pupils receive a tracking report approximately every two months providing parents and guardians with grades for effort, behaviour and homework, in addition to their working level.

All pupils receive one written report during the year and there is one Parents' Meeting for each yeargroup.

Career-long Professional Learning (CLPL)

Over the past few years, our teaching and support staff have participated in a range of planned activities to ensure learning is visible across departments.

A number of teachers are involved in Masters-level study, some are involved in West Partnership or Inverclyde CLPL programmes, whilst others lead or participate in the 'in-house' CLPL programme.

Teaching staff identify areas for further development through ongoing self-evaluation culminating in a Professional Review and Development meeting.



Partnerships

We pride ourselves on establishing strong partnerships with our families and the wider community. Partners make a significant contribution to lifelong learning and can support the development of the four capacities with children and young people as well as improving their soft skills, life skills and employability prospects.

Effective partnerships work with other service providers to deliver a tailored package to children and young people and their families to offer the most appropriate curriculum to meet the needs of both the establishment and the pupil.

Additionally, key partners make a significant contribution to the wider curriculum through contributing to the delivery of the experiences and outcomes and supporting wider achievements for young people. These can include but are not limited to:

- Community Learning & Development
- Educational Psychology Service
- Barnardo's, Save the Children and other third sector partners
- Local and National Employers
- Further and Higher Education Institutions

Parents as Partners

Parents and guardians play a vital role in the development of children and young people and should be considered key partners from the outset, in line with Inverclyde's Parental Engagement Strategy. We involve parents in all aspects of school life including curricular and extra-curricular events, parents' evenings, parent helpers and volunteers, parent council etc.

We are committed to working in partnership with parents and will do as much as we can to inform parents of their children's progress, encourage shared learning between parents and pupils and encourage parents to make use of online resources.

