

# Cumbernauld Academy



## Learning and Teaching Policy

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## AIMS

The purpose of this policy is to emphasise the central importance of learning and teaching and the need to get it right where it really matters – in the classroom. It is not a prescriptive list, nor is it an amalgam of other documents – rather it is a statement of intent, a vision for excellent learning and teaching and an indication of the way we can work together to achieve.

We seek to build a climate of supportive teamwork in which the contribution of all staff is highly valued for the benefit of all.



### SUCCESS

- Learning is planned to ensure progression
- Learners demonstrate enthusiasm and are motivated to learn

### ASPIRATION

- Teachers have high expectations of pupil performance
- Learners demonstrate a determination to reach high standards of achievement

### CREATIVITY

- A stimulating learning environment is created
- Teachers and Learners show openness to new thinking and ideas

### DILIGENCE

- Active, independent learning is promoted
- Learners take responsibility for their own progress

### RESILIENCE

- All Learners are aware of their next steps and targets
- Learners develop a sense of physical, mental and emotional wellbeing

## WHAT DOES EXCELLENT LEARNING AND TEACHING LOOK LIKE?

- It is well planned
- It incorporates a range of approaches and a variety of activities
- It develops knowledge and skills
- It is supported by well-designed resources and ICT
- It engages, stimulates and challenges learners
- It is active and independent
- It incorporates high quality feedback

## PLANNING

Within the Cumbernauld Academy Community 'Planned Learning & Teaching' should take account of strengths, personal preference and career ambitions of Learners by incorporating:

- Success criteria
- Experiences and outcomes
- Benchmarks
- Transition and progression
- Employability skills which develop skills for learning, life and work (BTC 4<sup>1</sup>)
- Learning Context
- Assessment Approaches
- Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing
- Programmes and courses across the curriculum

## APPROACHES

There is a number of approaches and methods that ensure effective learning and teaching. Current developments in education have put a very welcome focus on pedagogy and all teachers should have a range of strategies and techniques within their repertoire. These can include:

### **Collaborative Strategies**

- Co-operative Learning techniques
- Group/Pair work
- Timed activities
- Negotiated Learning Intentions and Success Criteria
- Active Learning
- Peer Teaching
- Interdisciplinary Learning
- Higher Order Thinking Skills (**APPENDIX 1**)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://education.gov.scot/Documents/btc4.pdf>

## Assessment is for Learning (APPENDIX 2)

- Shared Learning Intentions/Success Criteria
- Learning facilitated by teacher
- Plenary to check understanding
- Range of questioning techniques
- Pupil choice and participation
- Opportunities for experience, exploration and research
- Outdoor learning
- Lessons linked to skills for life, learning and work
- Homework and study

## CONTENT

Lessons should be designed by incorporating the vision of Building the Curriculum 3<sup>2</sup>.

### Principles for curriculum design:

- Challenge and enjoyment
- Breadth
- Progression
- Depth
- Personalisation and choice
- Coherence
- Relevance

### Learning and teaching

- Engaging and active
- Setting challenging goals
- Shared expectations and standards
- Timely, accurate feedback
- Learning intentions, success criteria, personal learning planning
- Collaborative
- Reflecting the ways different learners progress

In practice lessons should have:

### Beginning

The start of the lesson is generally used to recap on previous learning and to allow Learners to progress onto the current lesson outcomes. Teaching staff may use a starter activity to assess prior learning and to ensure the lesson begins in an appropriate and structured manner. The Learning Intentions, Success Criteria and skills being developed may be shared and displayed so that Learners are clear of expectations and outcomes.

### Middle

Throughout each lesson teaching staff should employ well-paced and engaging activities which match learners needs. This is enhanced by effective questioning techniques (APPENDIX 1). Learners may have the opportunity to work individually, collaboratively in pairs and small groups in a supportive, encouraging environment which maximises the use of resources available - curriculum resources, support staff and IT.

### End

Staff will aim to recap and review the lesson by revisiting the Learning Intention and Success Criteria, allowing Learners and Staff to assess skills and knowledge achieved. A plenary activity can be used for this purpose or to highlight the skills for learning, life and work which have been achieved.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://education.gov.scot/Documents/btc3.pdf>

## RESOURCES

It should never be forgotten the most vital of all resources is the teacher. The teacher goes far beyond curriculum delivery and can provide interest, motivation and, indeed, inspiration to the learner.

Within the learning environment however, it is expected that teachers utilise a variety of resources to plan, facilitate and enrich lessons to provide high quality learning and teaching, such as:

### **Online Learning Environments (OLE)**

Online Learning Environments provide opportunities for teachers and learners to store, share, discover and interact with information and each other both within and outwith the classroom. Commonly used variations include:

- Glow
- Edmodo
- Google Classroom

### **Digital Technologies**

Learners should have the opportunity to be involved in experiences that include a range of features at different stages of their learning. As well as helping to engage and support learners in the classroom, these technologies will help to provide learners with the knowledge and digital literacy skills to be successful in life, learning and work. Resources include, but not limited to:

- Interactive Whiteboards
- Digital Cameras and Recording Equipment
- iPads
- Specialised software

### **Textual Resources**

Traditional methodologies and approaches to teaching remain highly relevant to the delivery of the curriculum and textual resources can be regularly used to facilitate lessons. These can be found within:

- School Library
- Subject Specific Textbooks
- Subject Success Guides
- Revision Guides

Staff are encouraged to develop and create resources both individually and collaboratively that engage and challenge learners appropriate to their respective levels of study. Resources may take many forms including outdoor learning environments, external facilities and expertise from stakeholders out with the school.

## MEETING NEEDS

Effective teaching and learning must meet the needs of all learners, ensuring that there are clear progression routes, support and challenge, and an appropriate pace of learning at all stages with the class teacher paramount to this.

All pupils in Cumbernauld Academy are entitled to learning and teaching appropriate to their needs, maximising their potential and fully preparing for their future. To do so, they can expect:

### APPROPRIATE CURRICULUM EXPERIENCES

- Access to a curriculum appropriate to their needs offering personalisation and choice
- Be supported in accessing this curriculum
- Have the opportunity to engage in the Experiences and Outcomes as outlined by Curriculum for Excellence
- Experience a variety of resources and learning activities
- Progress through the curriculum at an appropriate pace
- Be challenged and inspired
- Experience, in S1 to S3, a Broad General Education encompassing Literacy, Numeracy, Health and Well-being
- Access, in S4 to S6, a range of qualifications suitable to their needs and abilities
- Access to targeted support through staged intervention<sup>3</sup>
- The chance to develop skills for learning, life and work

### EFFECTIVE TRANSITIONS

- Incorporating and building on their prior learning
- Effective use of tracking and monitoring data to inform decisions
- Receiving support when making decisions about their future
- Accessing suitable courses and qualifications to open up their future pathways
- Moving onto a positive and sustained destination

### RECOGNITION OF ACHIEVEMENT

- Recognition of their contribution to our school community
- Acknowledgement of their successes both in and out with school
- Rewards and praise
- Regular reports and feedback

### INCLUSION

- Feedback from peers and staff is used to support learning
- Have an input into the life of the school through Pupil Voice
- Be supported and encouraged in self evaluation
- Help in setting targets
- Feel valued and included
- Access personal support when required
- Be supported, rather than led, through their learner journey
- Work in partnership with teachers and parents/carers in reaching their full potential

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=18658&p=0>

## FEEDBACK

Teachers must give detailed and specific feedback to learners. They must also gather feedback from learners to help them evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching.

Feedback – whether verbal or written – must help individuals to understand next steps in learning. It must therefore be constructive and targeted.

### Learners

- The formative written comment is a very powerful tool which should be used by all teachers. In addition to clarifying the next steps for the learner, the formative comment can be fed directly into the Personal Learning Planning process.
- Within the classroom, verbal feedback should be used to check understanding and to acknowledge progress. If the formative assessment is delivered verbally, learners should be encouraged to record next steps, for example, in planners.
- Feedback from learners should be routinely sought through use of techniques such as traffic lighting and by the inclusion of a plenary session at the end of a lesson or series of lessons.
- Written feedback from learners is gathered by the teacher and should have a demonstrable impact on teaching and learning.

### Parents/carers

- Feedback will be provided through the school's formal reporting system including written reports, information and parents evenings. Events will take place throughout the year to recognise achievement, celebrate success and inspire.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

'It is the responsibility of schools and their partners to bring the experiences and outcomes together and apply the national entitlements to produce programmes for learning across a broad curriculum...'<sup>4</sup>

### Pupils

- Be prepared, organised and willing to learn
- Give your best effort at all times
- Take responsibility for your learner journey
- Respect the right to learn
- Engage fully with your teacher
- Ask for help when you need it
- Support other pupils in their learning/achievement
- Involve your parent/carers in your school experiences

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<sup>4</sup> <https://education.gov.scot/Documents/btc3.pdf>



**Parent/ Carer**

- Support your child's health and wellbeing in partnership with Cumbernauld Academy
- Facilitate meaningful dialogue with your child and discuss their learning experiences
- Help to maximise your child's potential by supporting the school policies

**Classroom Teacher**

- Regularly engage in professional dialogue and reflect on practice
- Embrace opportunities for staff development and leadership opportunities
- Demonstrate a commitment to sharing good practice
- Regularly engage in self-evaluation
- Create an ethos of achievement by design

**Faculty Head**

- Create regular opportunities for discussion of learning and teaching
- Lead staff development within faculties and encourage distributive leadership
- Facilitate sharing of good practice
- Monitor the quality of learning and teaching within faculty
- Liaise with SMT and Faculty staff

**Senior Management Team**

- Promote professional dialogue about learning and teaching through teaching approaches
- Lead and support staff development across the school community
- Facilitate sharing of good practice
- Monitor the quality of learning and teaching across the school community

## APPENDIX 1

# Asking Thinking Questions

I can use the information:

to build new ideas

### Creating

What might be a solution to ...? Can you make a proposal that would ....? What theory can you come up with for ...? What might happen if ....? How many ways can you ...? How could you create/improve/develop ....?

To express and back up my opinion

### Evaluating

What would happen if ...? What is your opinion of ...? What shows you that ... happened? How could ... be improved? Using what you know how would you explain ...? What evidence would support your view? Do you agree with the outcome ...?

By breaking it down to understand it better

### Analysing

What is similar to/or different from ...? Is the information based on fact or opinion? What is the underlying theme/meaning? Who do you think ...? What conclusions can you draw? Can you explain what would have happened when ....?

in a new way

### Applying

How / why is ... an example of ...? What would happen if ....? What can you use to show or explain ...? How is ..... an example of ...? Can you group/sort by features such as ....? Which factors would you change if ....? How would you solve ...?

to explain ideas

### Understanding

How would you compare/contrast? How would you summarise? Who do you think ...? What example could you give of .....? How would you say ... tell in your own words? How would you explain ...? What might have happened next ...?

to remember facts

### Remembering

What is ...? Where is ....? How many ...? How would you explain ... describe... show...? What happened after .....? Can you identify/ select/ picture ...? Who spoke to ...? Who or what were ...? How did .....happen? Can you outline ...?

# What is an AifL School?

A Place Where Everyone is Learning Together



