



## Tolworth Girls' School & Sixth Form

### Teaching & Learning Policy

**Reviewed and approved by OTLA committee:  
November: 2018**

**Next review: November 2020**

#### **Mission statement:**

Teaching and Learning is the core focus of our school; it is the key to raising standards and improving opportunities for all members of the school community. We aim to support all staff so that together we provide good and exceptional teaching which promotes learning, progress and enjoyment.

#### **The school has a responsibility to ensure that:**

- students acquire appropriate skills and knowledge;
- students are taught how to learn, how to reflect and improve their learning;
- students are making sustained progress, and where they are not, that intervention is put in place;
- students' achievement is recognised and rewarded;
- teachers are supported to develop as good and outstanding practitioners;
- teachers create and maintain a purposeful and safe learning environment;
- teachers have evidence for the Appraisal process and are guided in identifying professional development needs;
- priorities for school improvement at whole school, subject and individual teacher level are identified and addressed.

#### **AIMS - Teachers should strive to deliver consistently 'good' and 'exceptional' lessons by:**

- continuously refreshing subject knowledge, understanding the courses they are delivering and using current teaching and learning initiatives in order to enthuse, challenge and secure student progress.
- ensuring that they use prior attainment and other data to plan lessons and differentiate activities effectively so that all students can access the curriculum, make good progress and be challenged regardless of their ability.
- planning structured and well-paced curriculum which employ a variety of learning styles, activities and resources in order to engage, motivate and help students to progress.
- teaching lessons that are adapted to meet the needs of individual students within a class, to include challenge and scaffolding as appropriate.
- setting clear and appropriately challenging learning objectives linked to Bloom's Taxonomy and ensuring that these objectives are shared with students and reviewed throughout the lesson so that students can take greater responsibility for ensuring their progress towards them.

- effectively checking students' understanding throughout the lesson using a variety of formative assessment techniques and intervening promptly where necessary.
- supporting students to take responsibility for their own learning, providing opportunities for them to work both independently and collaboratively with peers.
- establishing a positive climate for learning in which the students demonstrate good attitudes to their learning.
- providing students with regular feedback in line with the marking policy, so that students know what they have achieved, and are aware of the next steps to take, to sustain progress.
- managing disruptive behaviour, consistently applying the "The Tolworth Way" Behaviour Guidelines appropriately.
- providing praise and rewarding students' learning and achievement appropriately.

**CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT - supports teachers to achieve these aims by:**

- ensuring that professional development opportunities (internal and external) are available to staff to enable them to achieve their appraisal objectives.
- providing high quality INSET focused on specific aspects of teaching and learning identified in the School Development Plan.
- providing a menu of professional development opportunities to allow staff to create a bespoke programme.
- ensuring, for internal INSET, that staff are arranged in small, cross-faculty groups to better facilitate professional dialogue.
- providing opportunities for colleagues to work collaboratively to share good practice - through Golden Lesson Week, in-school coaching, peer observations, learning sampling, sharing good practice through the TGS takeaway and in all meeting forums i.e. Department, Faculty.
- encouraging teachers to become reflective practitioners, evaluating teaching and learning in their classroom, through the use of coaching, mentoring, peer observation, lesson and work sampling.
- working effectively with external partners such as the Kingston Teaching School Alliance.

**QUALITY ASSURANCE:**

In order to ensure high quality teaching and learning the Teaching & Learning Collegiate, Leadership Team and Middle Leaders aim to work in collaboration to use the Quality Assurance process as a means of reviewing our practice, driving improvement and supporting colleagues in their professional development so that they excel in their role within the school.

The school has rigorous and robust systems in place to fulfil these responsibilities, including:

1. Subject Reviews
2. Formal Lesson Observations for staff appraisal
3. Peer Lesson Observations
4. Lesson Sampling
5. Leadership and Departmental Work Sampling
6. Development Programmes for Staff
7. Internal and External Professional Development Courses
8. Other visits to classrooms

The data from these processes are collated and analysed throughout the year by Leadership, Middle Leaders and teachers. Action Points, professional development and INSET requirements are regularly reviewed and informed by the results of this data.

**1. Subject Reviews**

These are conducted by external specialists (i.e. Local Authority reps) at the request of the Headteacher and/or Governing body. They usually last 1 day. The external reviewers generally conduct the following activities over the course of a day: formal lesson observations, meetings with

department staff (usually the Subject Leader), meetings with students, student book monitoring and analysis of data. Verbal feedback is given at the end of the day, followed by a written report.

## **2. Formal Lesson Observations**

Guidance for formal appraisal lesson observations outlining which staff are responsible for observations are issued at the start of the appraisal process each year. Quality Assurance takes place through paired observations. Teachers are consulted about the observation class as guided by the appraisal policy and are given a minimum of two days' notice of lesson observations via email. Verbal feedback is given within 24 hours and written feedback is given within five days.

In preparation, teachers are required to prepare the following:

- a lesson plan using the school or department proforma
- MINT class data (including SEN, EAL, PP)

## **3. Peer Lesson Observations**

Staff are encouraged to observe each other in order to develop their own practice.

A Golden Lesson Week will be calendared every term with a specific focus. All staff will have an opportunity to teach a lesson or visit other classrooms as part of their professional development during this week.

Time is allocated within the CPD schedule to allow peer observations to happen.

Peer observations are jointly agreed by teachers and usually have a specific focus. NQTs regularly observe other staff as part of their development.

**4. Lesson Sampling** is conducted by all staff and takes place once per term (as scheduled on the school calendar). It is used to:

- monitor practice, providing a snapshot of learning throughout the school;
- share good practice, by identifying best practice and providing quality time for reflection and professional discussion;
- promote collaboration between the curriculum and pastoral teams;
- promote consistency.

## **5. Leadership, Faculty and Departmental Student Work Sampling**

Exercise books, work folders and portfolios are reviewed by Senior and Middle Leaders with a view to quality assuring Teaching and Learning with a specific focus on marking, feedback and assessment. The selection of work aims to represent a range of student groups (key stages, ability, SEN, EAL, PP, ethnic). The process prompts the sharing of good practice and the identification of action points for the future. The summary data generated informs feedback to staff as well as Governors.

**Departmental Student Work Sampling** takes place once per term and is managed by Middle Leaders who feedback to their department and Head of Faculty.

**Faculty Student Work Sampling** takes place once per term and is managed by the Head of Faculty who feedback to their department and leadership link.

**Leadership Student Work Sampling** takes place once per term according to the published calendar and is managed by Leadership who select the focus and feedback to Middle Leaders and departments.

## **6. Development Programmes for Staff**

**Olevi Programmes:** the school is an Olevi facilitation school with staff accredited to deliver the nationally recognised "Improving Teacher Programme" and "Outstanding Teacher Programme". These programmes support teachers and leaders in their professional development and empower staff to ensure improvement is ongoing. TGS aims to run programmes every year for staff across the

Kingston and Richmond borough. Three places are reserved for TGS staff on each programme. Staff can nominate themselves through the appraisal process or are recommended by their line manager.

**Internal Support Programmes:** staff who are identified as requiring additional support during any formal process will be given in-school support and a nominated mentor to support them in their development. The school support programmes are managed by the Teaching and Learning Colleague.

### **7. Internal and External Professional Development Courses**

During the appraisal process staff have the opportunity to discuss their professional development needs with their appraiser. These needs should be recorded on the appraisal form but can also be identified during the year. The member of staff responsible for CPD notifies Senior and Middle Leaders of relevant courses during the year and course fliers are available in the staff area. Once a suitable course has been identified, the member of staff submits a request form to the Headteacher.

### **8. Other visits to classrooms**

The school has an open door policy - underpinning this policy is the understanding that there are other visits to classrooms that are distinct from monitoring, and in particular, lesson observations. Teachers should expect this type of visit as part of the normal day to day life of the school. The majority of such visits are made by a variety of staff as part of the day to day running of the school. Generally, advance notice will be given either by email or via a conversation the previous day.

Examples of other visits may include:

- Staff on call coming into classrooms to give support & address issues.
- Staff may wish to observe a student in class in order to develop an understanding of the behaviour of the student or to monitor a student who is on report or has been identified as a cause for concern (this should be pre-arranged with the teacher).
- External Professionals (e.g. Educational Psychologist) and/or SEN staff may want to observe the performance of a student for diagnostic reasons (pre-arranged with the teacher).
- Trainee teachers & NQTs will observe lessons of other teachers as part of their professional development or may shadow a student for the day to gain an understanding of the experience of the student (notified via briefing, email or the bulletin).
- School leaders, new staff, trainee teachers may pop in to lessons to get a feel for the work of the department.
- Invites from teachers to show examples of work that the students are doing
- A visitor to the school e.g. prospective parents on a tour, local authority representatives or members of the council.
- A visitor who is considering a career in teaching and may be placed in school for a day observing whole lessons (pre-arranged with teachers).