



Tolworth Girls' School & Sixth Form

Teaching & Learning Policy

Governing Body Committee: Quality of Education (Q of E)

Date reviewed and approved: June 2023

Next review: June 2025

Mission statement:

Teaching and Learning is the core focus of our academy; 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 academy 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 curriculum they are delivering and current teaching and learning strategies in order to enthuse, challenge and secure student progress.
- Ensuring that they use prior attainment and other data to plan lessons and adapt teaching effectively so that all students can access the curriculum, make good progress and be challenged regardless of their ability.
- Planning a structured and well-sequenced curriculum with activities and resources that ensure knowledge is built up and revisited over time to help students to progress.
- Teaching lessons that are adapted to meet the needs of individual students within a class, to embed challenge and scaffolding as appropriate.
- Setting clear and appropriately challenging learning objectives so that students see each lesson as part of a clear sequence that enables knowledge to accumulate over time.
- 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.
- Ensuring, for internal INSET, that staff have opportunity for cross-faculty groups to further facilitate professional dialogue.
- Providing opportunities for colleagues to work collaboratively to share good practice - through Golden Lesson Week, in-school coaching, peer observations, lesson sampling, sharing good practice and in all meeting forums i.e. Department, Year Team.
- 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 and Challenge Partners.

QUALITY ASSURANCE:

In order to ensure high quality teaching and learning, the SLT, 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 academy.

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

1. Subject Deep Dives
2. Formal Lesson Observations for staff appraisal
3. Lesson Sampling
4. Work Sampling
5. Challenge Partners QAR
6. Working with our School Improvement Partner (SIP)

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 Deep Dives

These are conducted by the Leadership Team in collaboration with the Subject Leader. They include time for the Subject Leader to articulate their curriculum intent alongside visits to lessons, student voice, work sampling, and a reflection of the day. This is collated into a report that is written with the input of the Leadership members and Subject Leader conducting the Deep Dive.

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
- Seating plan with key groups clearly labelled

3. Lesson Sampling is conducted by middle and senior leaders as per the school calendar in order to:

- Monitor practice, providing a snapshot of learning throughout the academy;
- Share good practice, by identifying best practice and providing quality time for reflection and professional discussion;
- Promote consistency.

4. Work Sampling

Exercise books, work folders and portfolios are reviewed as a department and with other relevant leaders to look at how the curriculum has been captured in student work. Assessment, marking, feedback, and student response to feedback is also evaluated through this process. The selection of work aims to represent a range of student groups. 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.

5. Challenge Partners QAR

This is a Quality Assurance Review that is conducted by a visiting team of external professionals from the wider Challenge Partners network. This is in collaboration with senior leaders at TGS and includes visits to lessons, student and staff voice, meetings with key colleagues, and a strategy and impact meeting with SLT. The feedback from this process is used to inform our SDP.

6. Working with our School Improvement Partner (SIP)

Our SIP will visit TGS on a half-termly basis, each time with a key focus for the day. The findings of each visit are collated into a report which is shared with SLT and governors. This helps the academy to address key areas in the SDP and to identify areas for the following term / academic year.

Examples of other visits to lessons 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 & ECTs 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 academy 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).
- A visit from our School Improvement Partner.