

## Friends' School Lisburn



### Learning and Teaching Policy

#### Introduction

The Learning and Teaching Policy is underpinned by the aims and values of Friends' School which seek to enable all pupils to develop their academic potential and interests within a secure, stimulating and happy learning environment.

The Policy is also set within the context of the Education (NI) Order of 2006 and takes account of "Every School a Good School" and "Together Towards Improvement".

As child centred provision is at the heart of learning and teaching, the policy is in keeping with School policies for all areas of school life, including Pastoral Care.

#### School aims for Learning and Teaching

Friends' School seeks to provide an environment, both inside and beyond the classroom, in which pupils, staff and parents are committed to excellence and where:

- pupils have access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum
- all pupils have equal opportunities and access to all areas of the curriculum and to all extra curricular activities
- the development of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills is emphasised across all Key Stages and areas of learning
- teachers and support staff share a commitment and enthusiasm which allows pupils to learn in a positive and individually challenging environment
- knowledge, skills and interests are developed using a wide range of strategies to reflect ability and diversity within the classroom
- assessment is an integral part of the learning and teaching process and is used both in an on-going way, Assessment for Learning, and summatively, Assessment of Learning, to inform teaching, develop learning, promote target setting and bring about sustained improvement
- all teachers engage in self evaluation
- appropriate data is used to monitor performance and promote further improvement and engage each pupil in the outcomes of his/her learning

#### Planning for successful learning

Planning for the delivery of quality learning and teaching takes place at whole school, departmental and individual levels as well as in consultation with outside educational bodies in line with the statutory curricular requirements.

- The School Development (3 year) and the one year Operational Plans provide the structure for coherent action planning for teaching and learning across all areas of the curriculum. Whole school priorities set out in the School Development Plan are reflected in the priorities in the annual Operational Plan and the plans of Heads of Departments, Key Stage and Curriculum Coordinators. The targets and actions set down are evaluated and reviewed against the success criteria established at the outset. Outcomes are used to inform future planning
- Planning for change and improvement takes place through meetings of the Leadership Team, Curriculum Committees, Curriculum Coordinators, Heads of Department, in subject departments and staff as a whole
- Staff training, either in-house or with external agencies, provides opportunities for self reflection, sharing of good practice and planning for improvement. PRSD is used to bring forward shared priorities and to promote good practice
- Consultation with outside educational bodies, including SEELB, CCEA and RTU informs planning
- Schemes of Work provide long term planning for the development and progression of learning within each subject at each Key Stage
- Individual teachers carry out medium and short-term planning which promote continuity and reflect the aims and intentions of the Schemes of Work
- Evaluation of pupil work at both individual teacher and departmental levels are used to inform future planning
- There are opportunities for pupils to share in the planning process through their self review and target setting

### **Creating and maintaining a supportive learning environment**

Friends' seeks to ensure that pupil learning is enhanced through:

- The provision of a secure and happy working environment
- Planning to ensure a smooth curricular and pastoral transition between the Key Stages
- Realistically high expectations which aim to challenge pupils
- Use of an appropriate range of learning and teaching strategies and resources, including a range of technologies, which support, engage, motivate and reward all pupils in their work
- Use of data to highlight individual abilities and areas for development
- Careers Education, Information and Guidance (CEAIG) across all Key Stages that provides opportunities to assist pupils make informed choices about career path ways
- Support for pupils' academic and personal development through school-based support teams and external support agencies, as appropriate
- The development of community links and partnerships to enhance work done in the classroom and extending opportunities for learning as set out in the Entitlement Framework

### **Learning and Teaching strategies**

Teachers seek to take account of pupils' different learning styles and individual needs, as appropriate:

- Differentiating learning to provide opportunities to extend the most able through such strategies as
  - Extension exercises, research projects, questioning techniques
  - Accelerated learning and early exam entry, the Open University YASS scheme, school enrichment programmes and external competitions
- or providing additional support through such strategies as
  - Reinforcement exercises, graded activities, pupil peer mentoring, Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
  - Classroom support, learning support beyond the classroom, resources to assist with special educational needs
- Seeking opportunities to connect learning across subjects and across key stages
- Aiming to promote independent learning and the development of research skills
- Promoting individual, shared, group and pair learning
- Providing opportunities for learners to develop numeracy, literacy and IT and to ensure that pupils have acquired the five thinking skills and personal competencies as set out in the revised NI curriculum over Key Stages 3 and 4
- Monitoring and evaluating pupils' work through both Assessment for Learning and Assessment of Learning strategies

Teachers seek to:

- Deliver challenging, well planned and well paced lessons with clear objectives and learning outcomes
- Employ a variety of methods and strategies that are fit for purpose
- Implement clear strategies for pupil management
- Incorporate a suitable range of assessment techniques which inform and guide subsequent lessons and
- Link homeworks which are set and marked regularly to work done in class

### **Assessment for and of learning**

Friends' School Assessment Policy outlines the rationale and strategies used to assess pupil work.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

The Principal and Vice Principal (Curriculum) are members of the Education Committee of the Board of Governors and consult with members of the Committee on the priorities set down for teaching and learning in the School Development Plan.

The Principal reports regularly to the full Board of Governors on the priorities for teaching and learning set down in the School Development Plan and the annual Operational Plan.

The Vice Principal (Curriculum) reports regularly to the Leadership Team on teaching and learning and seeks to work closely with the Vice Principal (Pastoral) and pastoral staff to ensure coherence in classroom practice and pupil support.

The Vice Principal with responsibility for the curriculum leads teaching and learning within School working closely with Heads of Departments and subject co-ordinators.

Heads of Department and subject co-ordinators lead teaching and learning within their subject areas.

Teaching staff work closely with their non-teaching colleagues who provide technical support in the practical subjects and who act as classroom assistants for pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs.

All members of staff seek to uphold the aims and values of Friends' School and, within that context, to promote high quality teaching and learning, in accordance with this policy.

Pupils are involved, through the School Council, and share in drawing up their responsibilities in the learning process, as outlined in the School Diaries issued at the start of each year.

Parents are informed and involved through the curriculum booklets, regular information meetings and parent teacher consultation meetings. Their role in supporting their children in all aspects of their learning is highly valued. Parents contribute to teaching and learning through their participation in the PTA, CEAIG activities and their active support for the extra curricular life of the school.

The Learning and Teaching Policy is kept under review by the Vice Principal (Curriculum) in conjunction with the Leadership Team and Heads of Departments.