Teaching and Learning Policy (2018)
To be reviewed Spring Term 2019

The purpose of this policy is to provide a single reference policy document for teaching and learning at Robert Bloomfield Academy (RBA). To this end it has combined a number of other policies into the following sections:

Section 1 – Rationale and Expectations

Section 2 – Self-evaluation and best practice

Section 3 – Monitoring the quality of Teaching and Learning

Section 4 – Monitoring the quality of Pupils' work

Section 5 – Continued Professional Development

Section 6 – Tracking pupils and pupil assessment

Section 7 – 'Setting' in the curriculum

Section 8 - Feedback and Marking

Section 9 – Presentation and Handwriting

Section 10 – Homework

Section 11 - Reporting

Section 1 – RATIONALE and EXPECTATIONS

Effective teaching and learning is the principal purpose of RBA. It is at the heart of securing high quality educational provision.   It underpins the successful provision of a broad and balanced curriculum, which meets the needs of all pupils. RBA is fully committed to supporting pupils and teachers in effective teaching and learning; to promoting the enjoyment of learning; to secure progress and high standards of attainment for all.

Conditions for Effective Learning
- Regular attendance
- High self esteem
- Constructive relationships with staff and other pupils
- High levels of motivation and enthusiasm
- High standards of behaviour

Conditions for Effective Teaching
- Commitment to improvement within the Academy and across departments
- In depth knowledge of pupils
- High quality professional development, including ICT, Numeracy and Literacy
- Co-operation and teamwork and opportunities for sharing best practice
- Motivated teachers
- Effective management of resources and LSAs

Features of good teaching and learning
- High levels of participation and engagement, encouraging a desire to learn
- A willingness to show initiative and responsibility for their own learning
- Concentration and application
- A willingness to both ask and answer questions with enthusiasm
- Acquisition of new knowledge, skills and understanding
- The ability to reflect, evaluate and set targets for themselves

It is expected that teachers will demonstrate:
- Good subject knowledge and build on prior learning
- Enthusiasm for teaching and learning.
- Effective planning and setting clear learning objectives
- A variety of teaching strategies with a view to developing independent learning
- Use of assessment systems to inform teaching and planning
- Good pace and challenge to inspire pupils
- Knowledge and use of cross-curricular ICT, Literacy and Numeracy as appropriate.
- Effective classroom management of pupil behaviour and use of praise.
- Effective methods of meeting individual needs.

Policy and Practice – Guidelines
- Curriculum planning, including schemes of work
- Lesson planning and delivery, including homework
- Monitoring and evaluation of teaching
- Monitoring and evaluation of learning, including assessment
- Learning support, including SEN and Gifted and Able.

Subject areas will implement Curriculum Policy through **Schemes of Work**, which will in many cases include homework.   **Lesson Planning** will translate these into detailed teaching and learning objectives. **Effective lessons** will incorporate a range of teaching strategies and will meet individual needs. **Assessment,** both formative and summative, will chart pupil progress, identify areas for development and inform future planning. Monitoring and evaluation of learning will form part of the assessment process. **Monitoring the quality of teaching** through a structured self-evaluation cycle, these formal monitoring structures will inform staff development and future planning.

Section 2 - SELF-EVALUATION and BEST PRACTICE

Background

As a method of identifying professional development needs and areas of curriculum development, it is important that an Academy is self-evaluating. Continuing Professional Development must assist the improvement of present practices. The Academy closure days should be used to create a 'learning environment' and share best practice in teaching and learning both within the Academy and within the Trust.

Broad Guidelines

- All staff should be involved in the sharing of best practice and be comfortable discussing it. The developing system of lesson study among staff will facilitate professional discussions between colleagues and outcomes which can be shared.
- All self-evaluation should be carried out within the aims and vision of the Academy.
- Monitoring and Evaluation of teaching and learning, the curriculum and professional development should be systematic, with feedback to staff, the Principal and LGB being prompt and open.
- RBA should take full responsibility for their own improvement.
- All staff observing lessons should have received training in how to monitor teaching.

Implementation

- Senior Management and Subject Leaders should self-evaluate Continual Professional Development (CPD) on an annual basis.
- The termly monitoring and evaluation of lessons and pupils' work by either SLG or Subject Leaders should feed directly into the CPD Plans for the Department and Academy.
- In the Autumn Term, there will be areas of individual CPD identified through the Appraisal process. In the Spring Term, SLG monitoring in conjunction with Subject Leaders should identify CPD for whole Academy or departments. This may be supported by the outcomes of Challenge Partner QAR.
- On a regular cycle, the work of staff, Senior Management and Departments will be evaluated in the appropriate forums (SMG,SLG). Again, this will contribute to the CPD process and the completion of the Academy SEF which though being a working document, will be formally reviewed in September each year.
- Senior staff to provide staff with guidance and support in terms of managing workload during this cycle of self-evaluation.

Section 3 - MONITORING THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

The monitoring and the impact of monitoring the quality of teaching and learning is a key element in maximising pupil progress and attainment. The subsequent evaluation of the monitoring process is vital for informing action planning for pupil needs, staff development and sharing best practice.

Aims
- To ensure the highest standards of teaching and learning
- To maximise pupil progress and attainment
- To inform staff development through target setting and action planning
- To share good practice and ensure performance management is effective

Policy into Practice
The monitoring process will consist of:
- Classroom observation followed by detailed feedback and review of departmental plans, identifying CPD needs.
- Learning Walks with specific focus.
- Regular scrutiny of pupils' work by Subject Leaders and SLT with appropriate areas for action fed back to relevant staff, focusing on pupil progress.
- A personal performance review (see Performance Management Policy)
- A standardised proforma will be used for formal observations.
- Training and staff development for those staff observing lessons.
- Performance Management cycle observations in the Autumn Term, formal SLT monitoring in the Spring Term and a flexible approach to monitoring by subject leaders feeding into department reviews and planning in the summer term to meet dept and individual needs.
- Other forms of monitoring by Subject Leaders will be ongoing throughout the year as the need arises in order to monitor standards and delivery of the curriculum.
- Regular interviews with pupils, the PASS surveys and a Leavers' Questionnaire.
- Staff to receive an annual report from the Monitoring by SLG, also presented to Governors, and involving Curriculum Governors in monitoring.

Classroom Observation
- The classroom practice of all teachers will be monitored by a member of the SLG or subject leader, by means of formal and informal observation
- Observations will be constructive, supportive and developmental and in line with guidelines from professional associations and performance management schedules as set by the Trust.
- Further observations may be requested by the teacher or monitor, but will fit in with the Performance Management schedule. No member of staff will be formally observed for more than three hours, unless there are unique circumstances (Ofsted, capability issues), however, informal activities such as learning walks, OTP/ITP visits form an essential part of Academy self-evaluation too.
- Observations will have a focus decided by the Academy, the department and /or the teacher. The focus will build on previous observations and evaluations and will include criteria.
- Observations will be formally recorded on the official Trust observation proforma and notes and feedback shared with staff.
- Challenge Partners (CP) QA reviews will follow the observation protocols in the CP Handbook.

Support for teachers
- Observation of subject leaders, skilled teachers and their peers (paired teaching) within subject areas
- Relevant external or in-house training
- Work with an SLE or similar.
- Use of staff across the Trust to give professional input.

Section 4 – MONITORING THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' WORK

Both SLT and Subject Leaders will be engaged in the regular monitoring of pupils' work, either choosing a sample from a group or choosing a whole class for scrutiny. Constructive written or oral feedback from work scrutiny will be given to teachers and pupils, identifying any issues, offer of support as necessary and monitoring impact. Best practice should also be shared. Pupils' written work should follow the following criteria:

Criteria – Pupils

- Pupils complete all tasks effectively and pupils correct work where necessary.
- Pupils respond to feedback where required.
- Work is well organised and well-presented and books are kept tidy.
- Progress over time is visible and targets clearly set within the feedback.
- The quality of content, structure and handwriting improves over time.
- Subject Leaders will look for evidence of the development of new knowledge, skills, ideas and understanding; taking into account the context of current work in relation to pupils' previous learning and the ability of pupils.
- All subjects marking to support literacy.
- Pupils reflect on feedback through MRI (My Response Is).

Sources of Evidence

- Pupil participation in question and answer sessions.
- Pupil response to listening and reading tasks.
- Completion of written work in class and at home.
- Discussion with pupils of what they need to do to improve and attitudes to learning.
- Improving marks, Classroom Monitor tracking sheets, effort and attainment grades.
- Tracking of progress through Pupil Premium Mentor meetings.
- Pupil use of resources for independent learning.
- Visual evidence of progress reflected in the pride in their work.

Section 5 - CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Rationale

We set high standards of expectation for pupils. A natural extension is to strive for excellence as professionals. Professional Development will facilitate reflection, provide insight into our roles as educators, share best practice, and help us manage change.
Professional Development must impact upon standards and practice in the classroom.
Continuing Professional Development should link closely to the aims of the Academy and the Academy Improvement Plan. The process of professional development must be carried out within a climate of a 'learning environment'. A CPD plan will be formulated for a 3-year programme and contained in the Staff Handbook.

Broad Guidelines

- *All* staff to have the right of access to CPD opportunities including national / Academy issues. Many of these opportunities will be coordinated by our Teaching Academy.
- Fair and transparent procedures for all staff.
- There should be an ethos of a 'learning environment', where we challenge our practice.
- Professional development should relate to the needs of the Academy, the department or the individual (relating to Performance Management).
- Professional Development should involve teaching skill development and the training for management and the delegation of responsibility.
- The Professional Development Co-ordinator should look widely for ideas and liaise with staff.
- Teachers to have opportunities to share and observe best practice, this will take place as ongoing development each term.
- The impact of Professional Development should be measured in terms of pupil outcomes or improved management practice.

Implementation

- Subject Leaders, the Head of Teaching Academy and the CPD coordinator should identify and cost whole-Academy needs.
- All staff should have the opportunity to complete a request form following the setting of appraisal targets in September, relating to personal, department and Academy needs. Other applications for CPD will be considered as opportunities arise and need is identified.
- All staff to have a formal target – linked to professional development needs, personal targets and performance management. Staff to have the opportunity to meet senior staff.
- Staff should provide feedback to the appropriate audience after attending training and consider keeping a CPD portfolio.
- Professional Development across the Academy should be constantly monitored and evaluated.
- There should be creative thinking and use of expertise in providing 'in-house' training.
- Staff to work with local teacher-training institutions to establish the Academy as a 'learning environment' within the responsibility of being a Teaching Academy.

Section 6 – TRACKING PUPILS AND PUPIL ASSESSMENT

The Final Report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels (2015) states that:

'There is no 'one-size fits all' system for assessment. The best forms of in-Academy formative and summative assessment will be tailored to the Academy's own curriculum and the needs of the pupils, parents and staff.'

Different forms of assessment serve different purposes for different people and organisations, including pupils, parents, teachers and support staff, Academy leaders, Academy governors, the Government and Ofsted.

There are **three** broad overarching forms of assessment, each with its own purpose, and the teachers and pupils at RBA engage formally with all three of these.

(i)   Periodic in-Academy formative assessment.

On a day to day basis teachers employ a wide variety of informal AfL strategies to inform their teaching and their own assessment of pupils; question and answer during class, marking of pupils' work, observational assessment and scanning work for pupil attainment and development are all examples of this.

Tracking Pupils

At a formal level, in KS2, teachers use Classroom Monitor to track a child's progress against the objectives of the NC stage and subject. The frequency with which teachers will update their markbooks will depend on the frequency of the subject and the nature of the objectives being covered. However, in order to monitor progress towards Age Related Expectations there are three 'capture points' (Jan, Apr, June) when data sets will be analysed for individuals and groups. Pupils at risk of underachievement are targeted for intervention. For KS2 pupils, grades defined by % figures are generated from the Classroom Monitor markbooks and are transferred into SIMS for ease of analysis. For KS3 pupils from January '18, 1-9 grades are captured on SIMS in the Jan, Apr, June cycle. Heads of Department ensure that staff input the necessary data prior to these capture points.

Classroom Monitor currently forms the Academy's main tool for reporting to parents, by providing parents and pupils with a contextual summary of their knowledge and understanding against learning objectives and wider outcomes and to identify where they need to target their efforts to improve.

Teachers cater for pupils' individual needs through effective use of Class Charts. This allows staff to identify particular pupils through interactive seating plans and share key information about pupils' learning with other staff who also teach them. Staff should access academic information on pupils and this helps assessment have real impact in the classroom. Teachers are expected to have complete seating plans for the groups they teach and these should inform their teaching strategies.

(ii)   In-Academy summative assessment

 End of year exams, short end of topic or unit tests, reviews for pupils with SEN and disabilities can all provide useful summative information, however in the core subjects a better comparison to a national benchmark is needed if summative data is to have real validity. In English and Maths, all pupils undertake a suite of GL Progress tests in English and Maths which form part of their end of year assessments. The analysis of these is used to inform judgements on pupil attainment and progress over the four year journey at the Academy compared with the national profile. This data

appears on teachers' Class Charts. In KS2 pupils regularly sit SATs style tests to track progress and identify pupils who need greater support to achieve their expected level.

(iii)   Nationally standardised summative assessment

National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2, including mocks in preparation. Results are analysed and the data is interrogated. Points for further action for the whole Academy, groups of pupils or individuals is then discussed in detail at Pupil Progress meetings and taken through the appropriate channels depending on key staff needing to be involved. Pupils requiring intervention are identified and strategies put in place, the effectiveness of these are carefully monitored.

Year 7 Catch up

Pupils who may not have achieved the scaled score at KS2 are identified on release of results. The progress of these pupils is discussed and, dependent on need, intervention is put in place without the need for primary/secondary transition. Details of Year 7 Catch up are published as required and form part of Pupil Premium meetings.

Section 7 – 'SETTING' IN THE CURRICULUM

The Purpose of 'Setting'

The purpose of 'setting' is to support and challenge pupils and thereby to enable each learner to reach or exceed his/her academic targets.

Principles

Pupils are entitled to experience:

- Teaching and learning that is differentiated to meet their individual needs and capacities;
- Equality of opportunity to experience personal success;
- High expectations combined with care, concern and encouragement irrespective of level of ability

Alternative Pupil Groupings

There are a wide variety of ways of grouping pupils for the purposes of teaching and learning. To avoid misunderstandings a common set of definitions is required.

- *Class* - Pupils regularly taught together for a named course of study – a general term.
- *All-ability Class* - Pupils taught together as a class, not constituted on the basis of their aptitudes or abilities.
- *Assertive Classroom Grouping* - The practice of the teacher allocating pupils within a class to small, short-term working groups for specific learning activities. 'Assertive Groups' may or may not be ability groups. Their composition is normally varied from one occasion to another. See Class Charts.
- *Set* - Pupils taught together as a class, constituted on the basis of their aptitudes and abilities in that subject.
- *Equivalent Sets* - Two or more sets of equal standing in a subject. The term "parallel sets" is sometimes used. The term "subject bands" is to be avoided as "band" is also used in a more general sense (see below).
- *Band* - A subset of the year-group, identified on the basis of general (i.e. not subject-based) aptitudes or abilities.
- *Inherited Set* - Pupils taught in a class in one subject constituted on the basis of aptitudes and abilities in another subject.
- *Collaborative Set* - Pupils taught in the same set for different subjects. The set is constituted by pooling evidence of pupils' aptitudes and abilities from the different departments.
- *Stream* - Pupils taught together as a single class across a wide range of subjects, on the basis of general aptitudes and abilities.

Statement of RBA Policy

At RBA, 'Assertive Grouping' within a class is encouraged and expected. 'Setting' is supported subject to the conditions detailed below. 'Inherited setting' and 'collaborative setting' are not favoured but may be given approval in some subjects, if the alternative is not to set at all. General 'banding' and 'streaming' on ability are not supported.

The process of 'setting' is supported on condition that:

- It is transparent and open;
- It is primarily organised on the basis of challenging expectations of future performance (targets) which are themselves rooted in prior attainment;
- Social and behavioural considerations play a minor role (as the understanding is that sets are based on aptitudes and abilities);
- Where there is clear evidence of a pupil's capacity to progress at a rate greater than prior attainment would suggest, the pupil may be placed in a higher set and the target adjusted commensurately.
- Where current assessment indicates that a pupil is working 'below target' there should be clear intervention at class/subject/Academy level before other responses are considered. The size of a set may well be a factor in decisions made in setting pupils, and is likely to be based on the professional judgement of the Head of Department.
- The current assessment information used alongside targets in finalising set lists is 'fit for purpose' and comparable across the cohort;
- Provisional set lists should be compiled with an awareness of gender bias and where this is significant discussed with SLT before lists are finalised and published;
- The appropriateness of the allocation of pupils to sets and the classroom experience of pupils across the sets is kept under regular review by the subject leader;
- Schemes of work and learning resources are modified to support teachers in achieving the purpose of setting and in working to the stated principles.

Pupils may change set mid-year, at key points, to better cater for their needs, and parents are informed.

Roles, Responsibilities and Procedures

Teachers assess pupils' work and record outcomes in ways which both help pupils to improve and track progress against targets;

Subject Leaders give guidance to their teams on assessment policy and procedures, determine common assessment tasks to be used across classes and maintain and analyse assessment information within their departments. They first populate draft set lists based on pupil attainment and targets. In consultation with teachers, draft lists are then refined paying attention to the requirements set out in Section 4. Where it is proposed that a pupil is included in a set on the basis of social or behavioural management rather than aptitude and ability, this is acknowledged and recorded at departmental level, then drawn to the attention of the Head of Year. Any set movements during the year should be communicated to parents and the reasons evidenced.

In drawing up lists, Subject Leaders maintain a keen awareness of how expectations on the following groups of pupils are being shaped - boys, ethnic minority pupils, disadvantaged, and pupils with special needs. Subject Leaders provide setting information for parents and are accountable to parents for setting decisions made. Subject leaders scrutinise pupil performance data on a 'set by set' basis in order to monitor and evaluate the effect on setting of the progress of pupils at all levels of ability, they are responsible to the Principal for keeping the setting policy of the Academy and its implementation across the curriculum under constant review.

Heads of Learning Heads of Learning are well placed to bring a 'whole-pupil' perspective to final decisions on sets or movements between them. If it is proposed to move an individual pupil between sets the Head of Learning must be informed by the Head of Dept.

Members of the **Academy Leadership Group** monitor setting matters within departments which they line-manage and provide both support and challenge to Heads of Department. Members of the SLG also support the policy from the perspective of their own roles and major areas of responsibility.

The Academy **Governing Body** moderates and approves proposed changes to Setting Policy, ensuring that the policy is compatible with the strategic development of the Academy.

Setting Policy - Assertions Which Underpin The Policy

- Setting is inevitably about ranking and sorting pupils. The arguments generally advanced for and against setting are finely balanced. They involve a range of factors - academic, behavioural, social, statistical, pedagogical, regarding equality of opportunity. Personal opinions about setting are related to peoples' beliefs and values.

- Learning is best when it is interactive and multi-sensory and when the learner is presented with demanding, varied, attainable and relevant challenges. This applies to all types of classes. Setting may make 'personalisation' more manageable, but not of itself assure it.

- The notion of 'general ability' based on a single intelligence is not supported by research. At least 7 different intelligences are generally acknowledged. Each learner has a profile of intelligences in which strengths and weaknesses may be identified. For some individuals, the differences between strengths and weaknesses are marked. An individual's preferred learning style(s) is related to his/her intelligence profile. Different aptitudes for different subjects partially reflect strengths and weaknesses in the intelligence profile.

- The setting approved by this policy must promote a culture of high expectation and equal opportunity. Equal opportunity is about recognising differences and then making provision which sensitively takes these into account in such a way that all pupils have a real chance to experience success.

- Progress in learning is not linear. Learning of individuals shows spurts and plateaux. Setting decisions based on differences at a particular time may advantage some and disadvantage others.

- Research evidence shows that organising classes by ability does not necessarily promote an overall rise in attainment across the ability range. Unless departments go into setting with a strong commitment to using it as a strategy in maximising the learning of pupils of all abilities, it will not accomplish its aim.

Timetable

The timetable needs to reflect the Academy Statement and the Academy's aims and policies. However, it must also reflect what is possible being, of necessity, a collection of priorities, compromises and best fits. The highest priority for setting is given to Mathematics, English, Science. A second level of priority is, budget and staffing permitting, given to Modern Languages and the Humanities. Other subjects comprise a third priority level - but may set when setting can be timetabled and staffed without unacceptable restrictions on other year groups or other areas of the curriculum.

Section 8 – MARKING AND FEEDBACK

The underlying principles

We recommend that the following principles underpin and drive the feedback policy within RBA. This is based on evidence of best practice from organisations, such as the Education Endowment Foundation and action research:

This goes alongside the explicit whole-school principle of regular marking (to be defined by departments according to lesson frequency) with a feedback structure of WWW, EBI and a task-driven MRI with the MRI completed in green pen

1. The sole purpose of feedback should be to further pupil progress and to celebrate success.
2. Feedback takes many different forms. It can be verbal, peer and self-assessment or more traditional written comments
3. Written feedback can take the form of coded, whole class feedback and marking against the success criteria.
4. Pupil feedback should maintain standards for presentation of handwriting, where appropriate.
5. Teachers should recognise errors in pupils work when giving feedback. This can include both subject misconceptions and SPaG errors. There should be a zero tolerance approach to basic punctuation errors for ALL pupils.
6. Time should be dedicated for pupils to respond to feedback. Pupil response should be written in green pen so both staff and pupils can monitor.
7. Time should be dedicated to engage in a dialogue with pupils to ensure they understand what they need to do to improve.
8. Evidence of feedback is incidental to the process; additional evidence for external verification is not a requirement.
9. Feedback delivered closest to the point of action is most effective.
10. Subjects have varying demands and allocated time within the curriculum. This means that each department may approach feedback differently in order to most effectively support pupil progress.

The overarching principle is that we celebrate what has been achieved, identify what needs to be improved and provide sufficient time to reflect upon this.

Each department will work within these principles to establish a policy which fits their specific needs.

Development and implementation of this policy to be monitored by HoD and at book scrutiny points

Effective feedback engages pupils in reflection and a continuous cycle of improvement. Appropriate and consistent marking procedures are essential to the promotion of effective teaching and learning. This policy should be read in conjunction with the RBA AfL policy.

Purposes
- To provide consistency in what can be expected by pupils and parents. Consistency for the benefit of pupils in understanding what they can expect from staff. Consistency for the benefit of staff who work across several departments.
- To give pupils responsibility for their learning and for raising standards .Pupils need to understand that this is a two way process and the expectation must be that they not only engage with feedback given but also they act upon the advice and reflect on how this benefits their learning.
- There needs to be absolute clarity on what the pupils' next steps should be on their learning journey, referenced against clear objectives. Feedback will help students to improve their work and will inform teacher planning and monitoring.
- To provide clarity on the Academy's expectations of teaching staff. To allow teachers to give regular, formative and directly relevant feedback to pupils to help them reach or exceed their full academic potential, and celebrate what has been done well.
- To be consistent on expectations in literacy.

We recognise that teachers' feedback to students on progress and attainment, and students' assessment of both their own work and that of other students and others progress is central to the learning process and to the embedding of effective AfL strategies. The focus of verbal and written feedback is on helping students gain a clear understanding of how well they have gained knowledge, concepts and skills and how to achieve their potential.

The purpose of feedback is:
- To assess understanding
- To recognise and reward success
- To correct mistakes
- To guide learning
- To extend knowledge
- To set future targets for learning

Feedback should comprise of the following elements:
- Pupil reflection on the progress they feel they have made and the next steps they believe they should take to improve further, often through a task driven MRI.
- Peer assessment of the work of other students in order to identify success and areas to develop.
- Teacher assessment of individuals or groups of students work.
- Feedback can take the form of either verbal or written, but ideally should contain elements of both.

Feedback to the student is most effective when they know:
- The purpose of the task.
- The success criteria.
- How far they have achieved this.
- How to move closer towards their learning goal.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all teachers.
Feedback should:

- Be predominately encouraging and constructive.
- Be personal to the child.
- Relate to lesson objectives and learning outcomes (Classroom Monitor statements)
- Challenge the pupils to think for themselves.
- When marking a significant piece(s) of work, follow the structure WWW (What Went Well), EBI (Even Better If) & MRI (My Response Is). (WWW and EBI will be marked in red, MRI in green)EBI will be task driven .
- Notionally be in the ratio of 2-3 positive WWW based comments to 1 EBI comment.
- Consider Numeracy and Literacy by all staff in all subjects.
- Be based broadly on a ratio of one third curricular marking that includes reflecting on attainment and next steps, one third based around literacy marking and one third administrative comments e.g. quality of presentation and completion of tasks.

In order to ensure teachers feedback effectively, it must be:

- **Regular**, kept up-to-date, and promptly returned to pupils. The regularity of marking should be a direct reflection of how often the pupil is taught the subject and the number of formal tasks completed by pupils.
- Clear to the student how the teacher uses the Academy's feedback policy, both in respect to the criteria for marking as well as the comments, levels or marks awarded.
- Consistent across departments, using Academy guidelines on the feedback policy. This should determine both the frequency of feedback to students on regular classroom tasks and the recording of assessed pieces of work.
- Common across departments in respect to marking standard English, particularly spelling and punctuation (marking for literacy). Guidance is provided in this policy.
- Used to correct important and significant errors.
- Applied to practical, project-based subjects. These also need to have regular marking, even if a whole project may extend over a period of time.
- Recorded where appropriate. Summative data should be recorded by staff and entered onto SIMS as required by Subject Leaders.
- Acted upon by pupils. Feedback should include the MRI prompt in order to ensure that pupils regularly engage with the feedback provided by teaching staff. This should be with reference to specific curricular based feedback and actions required as a result.
- Significant verbal feedback should be recorded where it has been given on a piece of work.

Internal moderation takes place within subjects to ensure consistent standards between different teachers; this should form part of the monitoring cycle by Subject Leaders as explained earlier in this document. External moderation takes place at liaison meetings, and moderation meetings with partner Academys.

Departments carry out summative assessments as appropriate, which are moderated in department meetings to ensure consistency and accuracy alongside the grading of Classroom Monitor statements and 1-9 grades. Assessments and success criteria are agreed in advance.

Whole Academy and year group book scrutiny will be used to monitor the implementation and the consistency of this policy across the Academy – see Section 4.

Section 9 – PRESENTATION AND HANDWRITING

ACADEMY RULES FOR QUALITY OF WRITTEN WORK BY STUDENTS – these should be implemented across all subjects and provide consistent expectations which can be supported through the effective and regular marking of pupils' work. They are on display in every classroom.

- Each piece of work should be on the correct type of paper and should have a title / learning objective and a date.
- These should be underlined neatly using a ruler.
- Leave a line between the heading and the start of your work.
- Each piece of work should be written using a blue ink (cartridge) pen or a Berol handwriting pen not a biro.
- If a mistake is made it should be crossed out neatly using a pencil and a ruler.
- All straight lines are to be drawn with a sharp pencil and a ruler.
- Diagrams and maps are to be drawn in pencil and labelled in ink, pencil crayons may be used if asked to colour in diagrams; felt tips are not to be used.
- Highlighters are only to be used as specifically instructed by the teacher.
- All graph work should contain a title and fully labelled axes including units.
- Where applicable, the Academy's calculation policy should be followed in all subjects.
- See Section 8.

It is essential that we encourage all pupils to write in a clear, legible style. Research has shown that a legible, joined-up style facilitates fluency and speed of written work as well as improving the accuracy of pupils' spelling. Careful presentation enhances the content of written work, and pride in well-presented work can be a powerful incentive to overall learning.

Aims:

- To contribute to the raising of the standards of handwriting and thus improve the self-esteem of all pupils we teach.
- To contribute towards all pupils attaining a comfortable, legible, flexible and efficient handwriting style.

Strategies:

- Pupils with handwriting difficulties will be identified on entry to year 5 using a handwriting checklist.
- Support for pupils with handwriting difficulties will be targeted initially at year 5, then followed through where necessary.
- Berol-type handwriting pens will be introduced in place of fountain pens.
- Provision will be made for left-handed pupils.
- Pupils will be encouraged to sit properly and to position their paper appropriately.
- Pupils who have already developed a joined-up legible style of handwriting, will not be required to change this in order to meet the Academy's adopted style.

Staff should remain sensitive to the natural handwriting style which may already have developed.

If there are problems with a pupil's handwriting then early diagnosis followed by a systematic method of improvement is important. Consideration of the following points can aid in the diagnosis of poor handwriting:
- the body posture.
- position in relation to the desk.
- positioning of the paper.
- noticing whether the writing is relaxed (poor spellers tend to write in a hesitant, disconnected and non-rhythmical way).
- noticing whether the pressure is correct (not too much or too little).

- the pen should be held lightly, about an inch from the point between the thumb and first finger with the middle finger giving support.
- the formation of the letters should be in the correct direction.
- noticing whether the methods of joining are appropriate.

Posture
If pupils are to become confident and fluent writers they need to be comfortable. Appropriately sized furniture is usually available, catering for all children, but teachers need to be aware of the variations required by individual children.

Positioning of Paper
If a child constantly replaces the paper in a different position, it could be that they have a problem – observation and discussion may clarify the problem. Ideally the child needs to be able to have their feet flat on the ground and their forearm resting comfortably on the table. They should be encouraged to move the paper <u>up</u> the table with their free hand rather than the writing hand moving <u>down</u> the page.

Supporting left-handed children
Staff are aware that left-handers have different needs from right-handers. Care should be taken in lighting, seating and correct writing tools. Allowance needs to be made for appropriate space and for the paper to be placed to the left side of the writer. Pens with special nibs for left-handers are recommended, although a normal fibre-tip handwriting pen is suitable. It should be recognised that extra time and consideration might be needed for left-handers to complete tasks – particularly when implements designed for right-handers are all that are available.

Allowing children to adapt their style to suit the purpose
When children have become confident hand-writers, they are released from the restraint of feeling it is essential to produce a neat piece of writing for every occasion.
Writing notes to aid their own memory may not be as neat as a piece of work for display purposes. Many children need to have the different levels of neatness explained to them and to discover for themselves when speed prevents legibility.

The mechanics of handwriting:

For the purposes of handwriting, letters are deemed to belong to one of three groups:
- small : a c e i m n o r s u v w x z
- tall: : b d f h k l t
- long : g j p q y

Capital letters are the same height as tall letters:
        D d   H h   L l
The letters 'p', 'd', 'q', 'g' and 'b' are closed:

The letters 'g', 'j' and 'y' do not join with following letters:

All lower case letters except 'f', 'x' and 'z' begin with an upward stroke.

Further detailed examples and worksheets are available.

Section 10 - HOMEWORK

Research over a number of years in this and other countries has shown that homework can make an important contribution to pupils' progress at Academy. The government believes that there is enormous advantage in children spending regular periods of time on different learning activities and has set guidelines on the amount of time that it is reasonable to expect children to spend completing homework. In years 5 and 6 the recommendation is 30 to 40 minutes per day (with continued emphasis on literacy and numeracy); if the homework activity is not reading then, in addition, 15 minutes reading a day should be encouraged. In years 7and 8 the recommendation is between 45-60 minutes per day.

The Academy curriculum has expanded in recent years but the Academy day has not lengthened to an equivalent extent. The use of children's own time at home is essential for the satisfactory completion of NC programmes of study. Homework offers children an important opportunity to complete written work independently, to organise their time, to reinforce class work, to study quietly, to accomplish memorising tasks and to extend their reading and research skills. It prepares them for the self-discipline of independent study and the increasing demands of coursework at the secondary stage. Provision should be made for pupils whose home circumstances (such as internet access) make completion of homework difficult.

Purposes:

- Personal writing assignments for the 9-13 age group require an extended period of reflection, preparation and redrafting.
- Equally, reading extension or personal reading is most effectively accomplished at home with encouragement and interaction by parents. To this end subjects set an explicit reading homework task once a year over a three week block which is later followed up in class.
- Personal research, involving visits to a library, questioning adults, using information technology or other resource material, could be continued outside of the Academy day or in lunch breaks.
- Practice of mathematics, which involves attempts to develop problem solving or follow up practice of algorithms, can be effective as homework assignments.
- Memorising of spellings or French/Science vocabulary is easier to accomplish quickly at home with the support of parents.
- Revision - looking back at previous learning in preparation for an assessment task is most effectively accomplished at home with encouragement and interaction by parents.
- Presentation and organisation: Extra time may need to be given to ensure that projects are neatly presented and well organised. Children will also be asked to develop art work in their sketch books that is later used in class.
- Preparation for independent study: The habit of self-directed study at home is best acquired early in preparation for the more extensive demands of revision when pupils have to deal with public exams.

Involvement of parents: Homework assignments offer discussion time and an opportunity for parents to observe their children at work, assess their progress, show an interest and offer advice on occasions. Where parents offer support that is sensitive and encouraging it has a considerable influence on success in Academy.

Parents are urged to support their child with homework tasks, while aiming to maintain a degree of independence on the part of the child, and to provide an area which is conducive to quiet independent study.

Homework and the Internet: Where research tasks may involve the use of the Internet, parents are encouraged to provide the appropriate levels of supervision for their child's age. Pupils should not be completing research tasks resulting in the use of vocabulary which is too challenging for them or text which is presented in a density that is too complex.

Parents should read and sign the permission form for Internet access in their child's homework diary.

<u>Setting homework</u>

Teachers should ensure that:
- The task is clear.
- The task is differentiated where necessary.
- The task is worthwhile and has a planned purpose.
- The task is set in context.
- Pupils have the means to fulfil the task and a suitable time frame in which to complete it. This is particularly true of research homeworks.
- The task is set and visible to the children on Firefly and recorded in diaries, the due date should be made explicit.

<u>Recording homework</u>
- When homework is set pupils should record the details in their diary; this should include the What, Where and When sections of the diary.
- Subject tutors are asked to check that this has been done for a few pupils (see Special Needs register and Pupil Watch).
- Class tutors should make **a weekly** check to see that homework is being recorded systematically.
- Parents are asked to sign this homework record each week to acknowledge that the work has been attempted.
- Where longer research/enquiry tasks are set, the commitment to these should **still be recorded in the diary as a weekly task**.

<u>Responding to homework</u>
It is good practice to give feedback on homework as near after the due date as possible
- Written homework should be assessed and marked formally or informally.
- Learning homework should be assessed where this is practical e.g. verbally.
- A written log may be kept of reading homework.

Pupils should know how homework will be assessed either through comment, mark/score or informal acknowledgement.

<u>Non completion of homework</u>
Pupils are expected to complete homework on time and to the best of their ability. A pupil who does not present homework on 3 occasions for a subject will be referred to Curriculum Support and may be placed on a homework report at the tutor's discretion. Study club is available for pupils to complete homework with some support.

Section 11 – REPORTING

The process of consultation and reporting to parents is intended to share appreciation of pupils' achievements, progress and future targets for improvement.

In making a summative record i.e. a report, the achievements of the pupils need to be presented against the key objectives of the National Curriculum. Within departments there needs to be an effective moderation system to ensure that these objectives are tracked and applied consistently.

The quality of summative records will depend on the tracking and record keeping of individuals and departments.

Written reports

The purpose of the written report is:
- To support, motivate and involve pupils in their learning
- To share and review information relevant to a pupil's personal, social and academic progress with parents, teachers and pupils.
- To celebrate successes.
- To involve parents, teachers and pupils in a partnership for identifying achievable targets for pupils and contributing to their accomplishments

The annual report to parents will be in three stages:
- The Autumn Term report which gives initial information on a pupil's Effort against agreed criteria. It aims to engage pupils in celebrating their positive start to the year or discussing any initial concerns.
- The Spring Term report highlights Effort, and Progress made against the NC objectives contained in our tracking system,
- The Summer Term report comments on Effort, Progress and whether the pupil has met the required standard for Age Related Expectations. It reviews their curricular targets and next steps. This report also contains an extended comment from the Form Tutor.

A SATs outcome in the core subjects for pupils in year 6 together with a comparison of the Academy's results with national data is included in the Summer Term report to parents. It may also contain contextual data which demonstrates where the pupil is in relation to a GL Assessment national benchmark.

Consultation with parents
- The suite of annual reports form the basis for discussion and target-setting between form teacher, parents and pupils at the consultation evenings held for all pupils in the autumn and spring terms.
- A selective consultation is held towards the end of the summer term for selected pupils, their parents and form tutors as required.
- A pupil's Academy diary is also an important channel of communication where parents and staff are encouraged to comment on their child's achievements. This is monitored regularly by tutors.
- The Academy is developing a system of on line reporting through the parent portal on the learning platform.

Monitoring and Evaluation

RBA's policy for Teaching and Learning will be reviewed annually.

Implementation and Review

This policy will be made known to all staff, parents/carers and governors, and published on the RBA website. Copies are also available upon request from the academy office. This policy will be reviewed yearly or as required.

Author and Date

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Date: 9th July 2018