



BRYN CELYNNOG

Comprehensive School

Nurturing Success

**TEACHING
&
LEARNING
POLICY**

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BRYN CELYNNOG COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Effective and meaningful teaching and learning is the core purpose of what we do. High quality learning, teaching and subsequently achievement are what we want for every student within the school. **The Curriculum for Wales, specifically the twelve pedagogical principles, state that good learning and teaching:**

- maintains a consistent focus on the overall purposes of the curriculum;
- challenges all learners by encouraging them to recognise the importance of sustained effort in meeting expectations that are high but achievable for them;
- means employing a blend of approaches including direct teaching;
- means employing a blend of approaches including those that promote problem solving, creative and critical thinking;
- sets tasks and selects resources that build on previous knowledge and experience and engage interest;
- creates authentic contexts for learning;
- means employing assessment for learning principles;
- ranges within and across Areas;
- regularly reinforces the cross-curricular skills of literacy, numeracy and digital competence, and provides opportunities to practise them;
- encourages learners to take increasing responsibility for their own learning;
- supports social and emotional development and positive relationships;
- encourages collaboration

PRINCIPLES

- The basics of teaching and learning – consistent, high expectations are our most powerful tool for ensuring a climate for learning in all classrooms.
- Lesson structure – clearly structured lessons promote learning.
- Differentiation – our classes are made up of individual learners with a variety of needs; a range of teaching approaches should be employed, taking into account of students from different cohorts and with varied abilities.
- Assessment – a range of assessment methods should be used to generate regular, constructive feedback that moves learning forward.
- Blended learning – all subjects should use *Microsoft Teams* as a platform with which to support students in their learning. Further details on this are contained within the Blended Learning Policy.

PRACTICE

The basics – how to create a climate of learning

- Entry into the classroom should be orderly. Teachers should greet students as they enter and students should ready themselves with the equipment they need for the lesson from the outset.
- The register should be taken within the first 10 minutes of the lesson.
- All teaching groups should have a seating plan. This should be designed in order to aid classroom management and to enable teachers to support and challenge their students.
- The ethos of challenge, hard work and the power of practice must be promoted by all staff in all lessons.
- It is the responsibility of staff to model the behaviour that they want students to adopt.
 - Staff should be assertive and respectful;
 - Staff should try to focus on praising the behaviour that they want to see
- Establish routines for the handing out of books etc. at the beginning of the lesson
- Staff must pick up on any behavioural issues. Staff should be proactive in managing behaviour within the classroom. Providing challenging lessons underpinned by high expectations is the key to successful behaviour management. Staff should use the school discipline policy to support them in this.

- Dismiss students in an orderly manner (table by table, row by row etc.)
- Reinforce these classroom routines whenever necessary, and always at the start of each new half-term. It really is time well-invested.

Lesson structure

*Teachers at Bryn Celynnog should always strive to produce lessons that meet most of the following criteria. These can be used as a “checklist” for lesson preparation – they typify the type of lesson experience that we try to develop at Bryn Celynnog. For some types of lesson they may not always all be applicable. The key is that staff should think carefully of the **challenging outcomes** that they want to achieve, and to **design lessons that enable all students to achieve those outcomes.***

- 1. Lessons should be conducted at pace, with a range of challenging activities.**
 - Pace and enthusiasm ensure that students will be enthused and engaged.
 - A suitable range of activities should be included in the lesson. These will often move from lower-order to higher-order skills, in order to enable progression to occur.
 - All students should be challenged to push the boundaries of their learning – staff need to display a growth-mindset in their planning, encouraging students to strive to achieve beyond their target grades.
 - The language used should encourage students to achieve.
 - There must be challenging activities that are suitable for students of all ability levels within the class. Differentiation of some form must be present.
- 2. Lessons may have some form of initial activity** to reflect on previous learning, to develop literacy or numeracy, to practise existing skills, or to introduce the new learning to be addressed during the lesson. This is not compulsory but is often advisable, enabling learning to occur from the outset.
 - A starter or initial activity can act as a “hook” to capture interest from the outset.
 - It can enable students to see the learning links with the previous lesson – to see where today’s activities fit into their learning journey.
 - The initial input can take any form, so long as it imparts initial information from which further investigation or activities can derive, or could take the form of a question. As such, it should occur within the context of a topic or scheme of lessons.

3. Lessons should demonstrate clear development of knowledge, skills, understanding, practical ability and so on, or any combination thereof.

- Clear progression must be evident in the planning and execution of the lesson, leading to outcomes at least in line with expectations.
- One way to achieve this is to have a number of activities, each developing skills, knowledge, understanding or practical ability – these should be of increasing challenge, enabling progress to be seen from the starting point to the end.
- This requires some way of gauging where students are at the start of the lesson, so as to demonstrate that tangible progress has been made relative to the starting point (that is; as a result of the lesson, have students made progress in their learning at least in line with their ability, as demonstrated by outcomes?)
- Mini-plenaries can be used at regular intervals to consolidate learning.

4. Students should be told in advance what they are doing, why they are doing it and where the lesson is leading.

- At all stages of the lesson students should be aware of what they are doing and why they are doing it. This helps students to see the logic of what they are doing, and therefore to engage in the lesson.
- The journey to be undertaken during the lesson (and why it is being undertaken) should be clarified from an early part of the lesson – this builds anticipation and a sense of engagement. This requires more than just reading through the objectives.
- Transition points should be used **overtly** to guide students through their learning experience.

5. Modelling should be used whenever possible to clarify processes and approaches for the students

- Show students what success looks like – this then gives them something to aspire to, and the tools to achieve with.
- Modelling can be written, verbal, literacy/numeracy based, process based, and so on.
- We often assume that all students can perform tasks that we may find quite basic – often they cannot. Spending just 30 seconds modelling key processes (such as

identifying key words or structuring sentences) can lead to a significant improvement in outcomes. Demonstrate practical activities whenever possible.

6. Lessons should respond to the needs of the students as they become apparent during the lesson – the best lessons are fluid, not limited by an un-reflexive (and unreflective) lesson plan

- Over-planning can act to stifle progress and innovation.
- Staff need to be flexible enough to react to what is in front of them. You need to be able to address the ever-changing needs of the class.
- You have permission to do whatever is best to secure progression and standards, whether on your lesson plan or not. Don't be afraid to deviate from your plan!

7. Some form of assessment should be present in each lesson, in order to gauge the extent of progress and, if appropriate, to identify next steps.

- Assessment should be seen as an ongoing, day to day, process indistinguishable from learning and teaching, rather than a one-off event.
- Assessment does not have to be formal or written, it can be an evaluation of learning through observation, questioning and discussion.
- Effective assessment is built upon an understanding of what it is you are looking to find. Consider:
 - Is the purpose of the assessment clear to both teachers and learners?
 - How does the assessment support learners to build on their prior learning and connect to their current learning?
 - How will learners demonstrate progress?
 - What criteria will you use to judge this progress?
 - How will learners reflect on this progress and support their next steps in learning?
- Crucially, assessment activities should enable the teacher to make a judgement on the progress of a learner to that point in time, as well as providing feedback to support future learning. Feedback should:
 - Focus on the individual learner, identifying strengths and areas for improvement
 - Actively engage learners, encouraging them to take responsibility for, and reflect on, their learning
 - Make clear the next steps required to move learning forward
 - Identify any additional challenge and support required

8. Lessons may have some form of closing activity in order to consolidate or to reflect upon learning, or to set the scene for the next lesson.

- The key here is to leave the students with a clear understanding of the progress they have made and, ideally, to leave them hungry for the next lesson.
- This should lead to some element of reflection or consolidation of skills.

Differentiation

Differentiation takes into account the needs of all learners and plans to ensure that all learners are set high but achievable goals and are provided with the appropriate support and challenge to help them achieve them.

We recognise that different students have different needs, related to influences both within and beyond the classroom. Awareness of the needs of specific groups will enhance the provision for individuals

Teachers will be aware of, and meet, the needs of specific groups such as ALN, FSM, and CLA.

Differentiation can take many forms and can often be grouped into differentiation by process (how students learn), and /or differentiation by content (what students learn).

- Differentiation by process includes:
 - Providing a range of alternative tasks
 - Deliberate grouping of students according to tasks
 - Assigning roles to individual students (e.g. leader, scribe, questioner, spokesperson etc)
 - LSA support
 - Varying degrees of challenge within teacher questioning and response.
- Differentiation by content includes:
 - The qualification/tier students are studying for
 - Developing and adapting resources to both support and challenge students, taking into account individuals' evolving needs.

Often differentiation will take the form of differentiation by outcome. This is often the case in summative assessments and in public examinations.

Reflective Practice

Decisions about teaching and learning are very context and purpose specific and should be taken by the class teachers. On a daily basis, teachers should identify students' greatest needs, match these needs with the most appropriate teaching and learning approach and assess the impact of this approach through student progress.

REVIEW

The policy will be reviewed annually in the light of national and local guidance.