


The Pioneers
ACADEMY



THE PIONEERS ACADEMY

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

<i>Policy to be reviewed</i>	DEC 2024
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<i>Head Teacher and Proprietor</i>	

At the heart of teaching and learning at The Pioneers Academy sit two core values:

1. **Excellence** - not settling for mediocrity, working to the highest possible standards.
2. **Climbing Higher** - to achieve long lasting **growth**, and recognise that intelligence and achievement are not fixed. Working hard and practicing make us better at what we do.

Our teaching and learning principles stem from these core values and the schools values of sincerity, modesty, gratitude, positivity, resilience, respect, honesty and kindness and have been designed to allow full access to the curriculum for ALL students, regardless of need. The implementation of the curriculum at The Pioneers Academy underpins the school's vision, ethos and aims. The delivery of our curriculum is designed to promote the **highest aspirations** amongst students, to **develop resilience** and for all students to **achieve their full academic potential**.

Our ambitious, flexible and supportive curriculum is inclusive, where the provision of support to our most vulnerable students is at the forefront of everything we do. All students, including those with SEND are at the

centre of this approach. High quality teaching and pro-active planning, ensure that students are able to know more and remember more and ensure delivery of 'Quality First Teaching'. The SENCO along with teachers provide bespoke information regarding students with additional needs and how best to meet their needs. Teachers will be expected to teach to the top and scaffold work to ensure students get the most out of the curriculum.

This short policy has been created to provide clear guidance to all staff in order to assist them in setting the highest possible expectations and standards with regard to Teaching and Learning at The Pioneers Academy. It is not a tick list of what must be seen in every lesson but should be used as a guide to best practice based upon the latest pedagogical research and evidence.

The 7 Principles of Teaching and Learning at The Pioneers Academy:

1. **High Expectations** - High levels of challenge are practiced consistently. This applies both academically and to standards of behaviour.
2. **Making it stick** - Students are taught rigorously for memory as well as understanding, through consistent daily practice.
3. **Masters of their subject** - Students prioritise subject mastery over performance.
4. **Feedback** - Feedback to students is timely, purposeful and elicits pupil response.
5. **Teach to the top** - Teachers consistently teaching higher level ideas and knowledge and making this accessible to all students.
6. **Evidence Informed Practice** - Our teaching is guided and informed by the latest academic research in education.
7. **Responsive Teaching** - Teachers respond and then adapt to the needs of students both in the present and in the future.

Tight but Loose approach:

The 7 T and L principles underpin the ethos of teaching and learning at The Pioneers Academy. From these principles, there are elements of each which we would expect to see in all lessons. This is referred to as the 'Tight but Loose' approach. Below is an outline of this approach.

TIGHT - elements of the teaching and learning principles we expect to see taking place in all lessons.

1. **Strong start** – This is implemented in EVERY lesson effectively and is backed up with a strong finish. Students not opting out - challenging students when they try to opt out.
2. **Teach to the top** – High challenge, low threat. See document two for further detail about this.
3. **Questioning** – rigorous, varied, planned, with wait time.
4. **Sequenced lessons** (fits into the curriculum and is building knowledge/skills) – students know where this fits in their learning journey and they have some idea about why they are learning what they are learning.
5. **High expectations** – Students sit up and are attentive. They listen and act upon instructions.
6. **Strong subject knowledge.**
7. **Genuine engagement** – looking busy is not a proxy for learning. Students sit up, pay attention and listen attentively.
8. **Feedback** – this could be happening in the lesson, in books, verbally to individuals, verbally to the whole class as whole class feedback.
9. **Clear, direct instruction.**
10. **Students know what they are learning and can articulate this when asked**

LOOSE - autonomy for the teacher/department.

All of the above will look different in different areas around school. How these aspects of pedagogy are implemented in the lesson is down to the department or individual teacher. Schemes of learning should be developed to consider aspects of the T and L principles.

Home learning:

Year 7 and 8

Students receive weekly homework. Maths, English and Science are set weekly and will consist of either online learning activities which are reviewed within the lesson or work to be completed in their exercise books. Home learning instructions are contained within the booklet which is distributed to students during form time each Monday. It is expected that students complete all work to the best of their ability and on time for their teacher. The home learning is also written onto Google Classrooms for both parents and students to view.

Years 9-11

Students are allocated home learning from each teacher on a weekly basis. All subjects set home learning via the Google Classrooms and it is expected that parents and carers check this with their child. Students must complete their home learning in time for the deadline set by the class teacher. Home learning may consist of practice questions, retrieval practice in readiness for a quiz of low stakes test, online learning or other work to prepare students for the next set of lessons.

Lesson Drop-ins:

There is an open door culture at The Pioneers Academy where staff are open to other staff visiting their rooms to see the practice taking place. We operate a timetable of lesson drop-ins which have a different theme each week. Each theme is based on a pedagogical approach we have been focusing on and where staff have engaged in relevant CPD. The drop-ins are carried out by various members of staff at differing levels within

the school.

This allows Directors of Learning, Pastoral leaders and members of SLT to be well informed of the excellent practice within school.

What are the principles that guide the school's approach to feedback?

Feedback should:

- be manageable for teachers and accessible to students;
- Be an opportunity to praise and reward students;
- offer clear strategies for improvement;
- be regular and returned to students in a timely manner in order for the feedback to be relevant;
- allow specific time for students to read, reflect and respond to marking;
- inform future planning;
- be consistent across a faculty in line with the faculties' marking vision.
- address literacy and numeracy misconceptions and errors where appropriate, using the general codes to make this more manageable;

1. Formative feedback / marking – This is an opportunity for teachers to provide diagnostic feedback. This is where WWWs and EBIs *could* be used. Students should be given the opportunity to respond to feedback. Time should be given for students to read and reflect, then make focused improvement(s) based on the direction offered by the teacher. (**Directed Improvement and Reflection Time/Task**). Other formative feedback strategies may be deployed - see the faculty example for further details about this.

2. Summative feedback / marking – is associated with work where grades or scores can be given. Students should be provided with information on their progress following summative assessments in order that they can learn from the experience and make progress in future.

Presentation of work

It is important that students are encouraged to present their work in an acceptable and professional manner. The general codes will help staff to tackle this where presentation has become detrimental to the progress of the student.

Marking frequency

Formative – Teachers are expected to use their own professional judgement when deciding on the regularity of their marking. Teachers must refer to their faculty feedback vision document and are expected to follow this.

Summative – For each year group, there are three interim points where students will be summatively assessed. The summative assessments must be clearly displayed in student books/files. Subject areas may choose to summatively assess more regularly if necessary.

Home learning – Feedback from home learning must be prominent in student files/books. For those subjects in which online learning platforms are used for home learning, electronic records may be more appropriate.