

PRIOR'S FIELD SCHOOL

GODALMING SURREY

GSA BSA Girls' Boarding and Day 11-18

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

Prior's Field is committed to providing an excellent education which brings out the best in each pupil according to her abilities and talents.

The School Development Plan outlines a number of objectives including the following:

- To make school a dynamic and inspiring experience
- To develop self-confidence
- To encourage independent thinking

While every contact with pupils is an opportunity to promote the aims of the school and to reflect our aims and objectives, it is within the controlled environment of the classroom that staff make their greatest contribution.

It is essential that a variety of teaching styles and methodologies are encouraged and valued – that all staff are made aware of the aspects of good teaching practice and that Heads of Department are effective in monitoring the quality of teaching in their subject area.

Planning

- Shows that the lesson is related to a sequence of learning.
- Ensures that appropriate resources have been organised.
- Decides which teaching style(s) will work best, taking into account that different pupils learn in different ways.
- Indicates how long to spend on different activities to ensure pace.
- Makes use of available data to inform these choices.
- Enables pupils to use a variety of strategies to measure their own progress in lessons or over a module of work.
- Differentiates, ensuring that pupils of all ability make good progress within each lesson, including the exceptionally able and those with specific learning needs and those for whom English is an additional language.

Objectives

- Should be challenging, for each pupil.
- Should be appropriate for the pupils at their particular stage of learning.

- Are made clear to pupils, to increase motivation, knowledge, understanding and skills and are reflected on at the end of each lesson and/or module of work.
- There must be demonstrable progression through each year of study and between each phase.

Methods

- Ensure effective learning across the ability range.
- Are various and engage the pupils in a number of different activities during a lesson, using a variety of resources, including ICT.
- Include effective questioning and response to questions.
- Provide opportunities for group work and independent learning.
- Ensure a good pace and an element of challenge in the tasks set.
- Ensure opportunities exist for creative work and to encourage independent thinking.
- Ensure a variety of assessment techniques are explicit.
- Ensure assessment and monitoring is frequent, coherent and targeted and that it reflects agreed department policies.
- Provide opportunities for discussion of learning objectives and success criteria.
- Ensure lessons build on pupils' prior learning and conceptual understanding.

Organisation

- A positive, relaxed, purposeful environment is created with maintenance of order and co-operation. Praise should be used wherever possible.
- Good use of books, materials and ICT to stimulate enthusiasm, maintain interest and to be clearly understood by pupils.
- Pupils are able to take responsibility for their own learning and are encouraged to work with others to enhance their learning opportunities.

Teacher Competence

- The teacher should have secure knowledge and understanding of the subject.
- There should be a balance between firmness and friendliness to foster good relationships with pupils.
- The teacher's enthusiasm for the subject should inspire pupils to participate and learn.
- The response to questions and comments from pupils needs to be positive and encouraging to deepen knowledge, understanding and self-esteem.
- Clarification of presentation, instruction, demonstration and explanation are important.
- A good knowledge and understanding of each pupil's achievement, progress and learning needs is essential, as is careful tracking and regular assessment and record keeping.
- Teachers should keep abreast of developments in their subject areas and adapt their teaching to new demands.

- Teachers should give regular feedback on attainment, using constructive marking and giving strategies for improvement.
- Teachers should follow school and departmental policies on marking, reporting and assessment.
- Teachers should give pupils the opportunity to set their own targets, encouraging them to be more independent and confident in their thinking and learning.
- Teachers must give appropriate attention to health and safety and encourage pupils to take responsibility for safe working.

Implementation

- Comprehensive schemes of work in each subject area will outline the content to be covered in each module or topic to ensure consistent practice within the department.
- The content must be relevant to the age and ability of the teaching group.
- Schemes of work and short-term planning outline differentiation with suggested activities relevant to the various needs of the pupils.
- Assessment methods that allow progress to be measured by both the teacher and pupil.
- The HoD, as budget manager, ensures that appropriate books, ICT, DVDs, videos and other resources are ordered in good time and are available to all teachers.
- HoDs should develop good liaison with Co-ordinators in other phases to ensure progression in learning and a smooth transition between phases.
- A regular audit and the cataloguing of resources will mean that they are easily accessed and regularly used.
- Display boards within the classrooms and in the corridors outside should be kept up to date, attractive and include plenty of the pupils' work.
- Reciprocal lesson observation within and between departments is a very effective way of sharing good practice.
- Regular departmental meetings focusing on particular age groups and/or topics keep staff up to date with expectations of teaching styles and outcomes.

Monitoring

- The Head of Department is the named person responsible for ensuring that the School Teaching Policy is reflected in the teaching of their subject.
- Each subject teacher is also responsible for ensuring that this policy is reflected in their own teaching.
- Informal and formal lesson observation by the HoD will lead to praise for good practice and provide an opportunity for individual staff to discuss new ideas and any problems they may have.
- HoDs should look at pupils' exercise books and preps regularly to ensure that the work is relevant to the pupils' needs as well as being challenging and stimulating. HoDs and subject teachers should talk with pupils and ask them if

they know how they are doing and what they should do next in order to improve.

- Parents' Evenings, report reply slips and pupil self-evaluations provide other sources of information regarding pupils' perceptions of how challenging is the work they do in school and can inform the teacher as to how much time a pupil spends doing homework.
- Whole Department scrutiny of test results and other recorded assessments can lead to discussions regarding the effectiveness of different teaching styles and pupil activities.

Evaluation

- Built into the Departmental timetable of meetings for the year should be times when all the teachers can decide which strategies were most effective in teaching a particular age group and/or topic.
- Such whole departmental discussions must be run by the HoD in such a way as to ensure that all staff have an opportunity to contribute.
- Scrutiny of end of year examinations, and grades achieved compared with those predicted and with value-added data, will give an indication as to whether or not the teaching in the department has been effective.
- Teacher appraisal by the HoD is an opportunity to celebrate good practice and to identify further training needs for staff who wish to develop their expertise in a chosen field.
- Feedback from pupils on their teaching and learning experiences over a term/year.
- Parental discussion at Parents' Evenings.

Date of next review: Spring 2010