

WEST CALDER HIGH SCHOOL



# LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY

2017

## Purpose

This policy is designed to create a common understanding that high quality meaningful learning in West Calder High School should reflect the aims, vision and values of the school. The values of **Ambition - Equity - Relationships - Respect and Wellbeing**. This will allow us to work to achieve the level 5 Illustration as set out in How Good is our School 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Our objective is to create a shared understanding of high quality learning and teaching that will enhance classroom practice and ensure an excellent learning experience for all our young people within a positive, inclusive, motivating and stimulating learning environment. Our pupils, learners and parents will be clear on what is to be learned and what success will look like.

The aims of the learning and teaching policy reflect the level 5 illustration set out in HGIOS 4 – 2.3 (Learning, Teaching and Assessment) with aspirations that West Calder High School is a school that;

- Encourages purposeful and focused learning
- Ensures learners can link learning
- Meets the needs of all learners
- Provides learners with high quality feedback
- Ensure that learners understand what success looks like, can lead learning and can reflect on their learning with confidence
- Develops a strategic approach to improving learning and teaching

*“Learning is the process of developing sufficient knowledge to then move to a deeper or conceptual understanding...it is via developing ‘learning’ for all students that there will be subsequent effects on achievement.” J.Hattie 2012*

Teachers in West Calder High School will provide learning and teaching of the highest quality, fostering a climate of collegiality where the contribution of all staff is valued. This will take place in an environment where challenge, endeavour and self-reflection are understood as key elements of successful learning. West Calder is a school where all learners' needs are met and achievement is celebrated. Staff and learners will work together to build positive relationships based on respect for the individuals and the class.

The curriculum is designed to support young people to become more equipped for life in and beyond school. Planning has been designed to incorporate breadth, choice and progression to meet learners' needs across all areas of the curriculum.

By incorporating skilled questioning and high quality feedback into lessons this will deepen learners understanding and increase their overall ability and confidence to cope with increased challenge.

This Policy has been developed using evidence on the impact of learning and teaching in West Calder High School through the HMIE Record of Inspection findings 2016, local authority good practice visits, SLT and PTC quality assurance, staff working groups, pupil feedback and extensive pedagogical research.

# LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY

Key Features of Highly Effective Practice:

## **Planning for Effective Learning**

Continuity, pace and progression is realised because of long and short term planning at individual, faculty and whole school level. All staff plan effective lessons where strategies are designed to maximise learner understanding. Learning takes place within an organised learning environment where teachers use relevant evidence to support the planning process.

Learning intentions and success criteria are integral to effective planning, used to structure lessons and provide a context for learning that is both meaningful and challenging.

Homework is featured as part of the planning process and designed to contribute meaningfully to the learners' progress.

## **Creating a Positive Learning Environment**

Teachers create an ethos that promotes attainment and achievement and they work in partnership with learners to create an environment based on trust and respect. High expectations are set to provide an appropriate pace for learning. Pupils understand that contexts for learning are relevant and allow the development of skills for life, learning and work. Learners should be included in the learning process and encouraged to think more independently so that they understand what they are to learn, why the learning is relevant and how they best learn. Learners increasingly take responsibility through more critical reflection that will lead to further improvements.

Learning episodes should encourage the learner to think more deeply about learning. Teachers use higher order thinking skills and feedback to scaffold learning more successfully. The contribution of the learner is increased so they are confident to work independently and collaboratively. Teachers encourage a clear connection between positive relationships including a positive approach to classroom management. These high quality respectful relationships will form the basis of effective learning and teaching.

## **Effectively Meeting Learners Needs**

Teachers ensure equity and inclusion whereby all learners are encouraged to fulfil their learning potential regardless of gender, culture, language, religion or life circumstances.

Learning is planned and differentiated to ensure progression and to match the learners' needs, stage of development, aptitudes and interests. Teachers work in collaboration with support staff to ensure positive outcomes for all learners. Learners needs are formatively and summatively identified from a variety of sources.

Learners' are made aware of their progress and areas for improvement and will have clear goals for learning set through a range of proven strategies.

## **Effective Teaching**

Teachers are knowledgeable and understand their contribution to the learning process and learners' development. Prior learning is linked and connections are made for young people to relevant and realistic contexts where appropriate. Teachers know their learners well and make use of all available data and can adapt to meet individual needs. Teachers use varied, active and differentiated tasks to meet the needs of all. Teachers also use skilled and varied questioning to check for understanding, promote intellectual enquiry and to increase pupil voice. Learning is supported by the effective integration of digital technology that will enhance learners experience.

## **Effective Assessment, Feedback and Reporting**

Teachers use a wide range of effective and appropriate assessment tools in order to create holistic and meaningful assessment judgements that are based on robust evidence. Meaningful assessment leads to high quality reporting and allows an accurate critical reflection on standards and quality of learning. This is designed to bring about continued improvements in attainment and achievement.

Assessment where possible will be integrated as part of learning to ensure a systematic approach to measuring progress and identifying next steps for learners. High quality feedback both written and oral will play a pivotal role in the success for learners. The feedback they receive will be regular and will relate to the quality of their work and what is deemed to be the success criteria. Learners will be clear on what they can improve and how they can improve their learning and time will be provided to act on that feedback. Learner conversations will be integral to supporting this process.

Parents and carers are encouraged to support the school and the young person's learning through effective reporting.