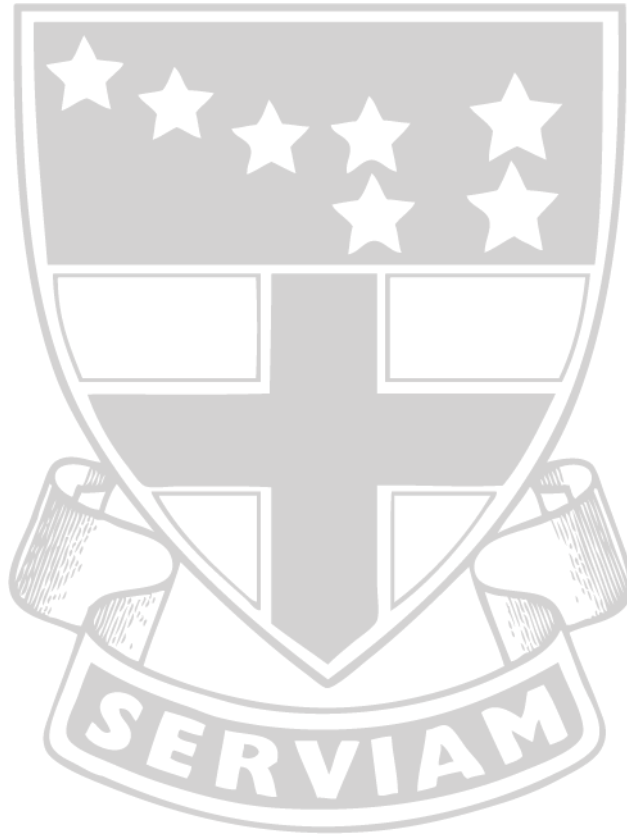


# **TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY**



**Date of Review: December 2024**

**Date of Next Review: December 2026**

## **Teaching and Learning Policy**

### **Aim**

The intention of the curriculum at St Angela's Ursuline School is to provide high challenge subject specialist learning that equips students not only for examination but future employment and life success.

Fluency in both literacy and numeracy are integral to this aim alongside developing the side skills, abilities, characteristics and traits that match our Ursuline ethos and the important knowledge needed that reflects British Values and the desire to be a force for good in the world.

Our school offers all students a broad and balanced curriculum that develops their intellectual curiosity and subject expertise. Our curriculum intent is to be ambitious, challenging and inspire students to have high aspirations, discover new talents and achieve their full potential. Through our engaging curriculum we seek to meet the needs of the whole person by ensuring the highest possible standards in education. The impact of our curriculum is that it prepares students not only to be highly successful but also ready for the next stage of their life journey.

In order to achieve this aim teaching and learning is central to everything we do. We consider ourselves a community of learners and use every opportunity to promote excellence, share best practice and improve our pedagogy of teaching and learning so that every child in every lesson always receives an excellent educational experience. We utilise the latest research and the teachers standards to provide an evidence-informed approach

### **St Angela's Teaching and Learning Priorities**

**2024/2025**

As a school our teaching and learning focus priorities are:

1. Providing high challenge for all students
2. Improving high attainers outcomes in KS5
3. Ensuring we meet the current specific subject departmental aims to ensure student success.

### **Excellent Teaching and Learning**

To embed a provision of excellent teaching and effective learning we expect all staff to ensure that the following takes place consistently.

Teachers must:

- Always have high expectations which inspire and motivate students.
- Provide high challenge for all students.
- Demonstrate outstanding knowledge and understanding of the subject they are teaching and the curriculum requirements, using both to inspire students interest.
- Plan and deliver lessons which are directly linked to the department's planned sequence of learning.
- Play an active part in the department's development of lesson sequences and content.
- Support all learners ensuring that differentiation is appropriate and responds to the needs and strengths of all students.
- Embed the use of flipped learning as a substantial pedagogical practice across all key stages to maximise effective learning both within the classroom and beyond.
- Provide students with robust timely formative and summative assessments with diagnostic feedback which helps them assess their understanding and provide next step approaches to future progress.
- Establish excellent professional relationships based on mutual respect that recognises and praises students efforts and achievements.
- Apply clear routines that include starting and ending lessons on time and in a structured manner to maintain high behaviour for learning expectations.
- Employ a range of teaching strategies to ensure appropriate pace and challenge that results in progress and makes effective use of lesson time.
- Create a learning environment that is ambitious and where students feel their contributions are valued, have no fear of failure, are resilient & confident in tackling learning challenges.
- Involve effective use of higher order questioning to probe students' knowledge and understanding and to challenge their thinking and intellectual curiosity
- Ensure cross-curricular links are established, particularly students' literacy and numeracy skills
- Have high expectations regarding the quality of students work and this should be evident in their books and folders as they continue to make progress
- Employ strong use of technology such as the the chromebooks and google suite to facilitate learning

### **St Angela's Learners**

St Angela's students are ambitious, hard working, resilient students who understand that we are all learners. They share our high expectations and feel secure and confident in their school. They respect their teachers and peers and maximise every opportunity both within the lesson and beyond to engage fully in learning. Their aspirations from Year 7 include aiming for entry to the best universities but more importantly they are personally driven to develop their intellectual curiosity, fulfil their true potential and be proud of their achievements.

### **Meta skills**

Meta skills are innate, timeless, higher-order skills that create adaptive students; able to succeed whatever the future brings. Adopting the consistent use of meta- skills offers a common skills vocabulary for St. Angela's students to better recognise and articulate their

skills development. The meta skills below that are signposted to students throughout their learning encourage self- management, social intelligence and innovation;

1. Creativity
2. Focusing
3. Leading
4. Initiative
5. Critical thinking
6. Collaborating

### **Department schemes of learning**

Our departments deliver a well planned curriculum that has a clear and ambitious intent. The department's excellent subject and curriculum knowledge has been used to plan and implement a series of well sequenced lessons that maximise the overall impact for every learner. Every department outlines their intent and implementation strategies for the whole year in their subject overviews which are shared on the school website ensuring all stakeholders are fully informed of the learning direction that students are engaged in.

### **Literacy and Numeracy**

All students are encouraged to read (for pleasure/interest) to develop their literacy skills. We promote high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English. The TLC (school library) has a range of books that are regularly updated for all students to borrow. This is further supported by an online library provision. Students are taught to take ownership of their learning through reading and research.

The plasmas throughout the school are used to communicate with students recent school news, our word of the week and book recommendations as well study tips for all learners.

Mathematical fluency and confidence in numeracy is developed throughout the curriculum.

### **Flipped Learning and homework**

Homework is an essential component of the learning process. The work set consolidates and extends the knowledge and understanding that students have acquired within lessons and supports them in preparation for future learning. Homework is vital to our students' progress at school.

At St Angela's we utilise Flipped learning as a form of pre-learning for lessons. Flipped learning (also known as prep work) is our main type of homework.

The main focus of 'high challenge for all' has been through flipped learning as a T&L initiative. Flipped learning means that activities that were traditionally done in the lesson are now completed at home. Students are introduced to the learning material before the lesson, which then means that lesson time can be used to deepen understanding through classroom activities.

Flipped learning is a pedagogical approach in which the conventional notion of classroom-based learning is inverted, so that students are introduced to the learning material before class, with classroom time then being used to deepen understanding through discussion with peers and problem-solving activities facilitated. Flipped learning moves students away from passive learning and towards active learning where students engage in collaborative activity, peer learning and problem-based learning. Within this context, the role of the teacher shifts towards that of facilitator and coach by empowering students to take control of their own learning. The use of technology further enriches the flipped learning process and promotes skills that are essential for 21st-century learning.

To be an academically successful student throughout the school homework must be constant and the amount of hours spent on homework must be appropriate to the level of study. Homework must always be well designed and purposeful. Quality is always more important than quantity. Excessive amounts of poorly designed tasks do not contribute to the learning process and can have detrimental effects on students' wellbeing.

### **Teaching and Learning Resources**

Departments effectively utilise their capitation to purchase resources that provide the best impact for students and are value for money. Resources are regularly updated to reflect changes in specifications and our schemes of learning. Textbooks and Ebooks are provided to students for courses and departments subscribe to subject specific platforms that enable students to access online material beyond the lesson.

### **Google for Learning**

The school has had a continuous programme of investing in technology to ensure that the latest innovations can be used to further support students' learning. We utilise a wide range of Google applications, such as Google classroom to harness all the advantages that Google can bring to both our students and staff. The use of the chromebooks provides an opportunity for students to complete work electronically which complements the work they undertake in their exercise books.

The use of chromebooks also supports us as a school in being more sustainable for the environment by reducing unnecessary print waste. The school is rich in resources with every classroom equipped with an IWB / Plasma screen. Staff also utilise visualisers to support teaching and learning. Our effective ICT service provision ensures that our systems are well managed and regularly updated so that technology is a constant companion in our teaching and learning journey.

### **Marking and Assessments**

Effective diagnostic marking is a key component of teaching and learning, and it is a way of acknowledging students' work, checking the outcomes and making decisions about what teachers and students need to do next, with the primary aim of driving student progress.

Students should be able to answer two main questions about their learning:

- What am I doing well in this specific topic and subject?

- What do I need to do next to improve my work in this subject?

Marking is one part of the feedback that students receive from their teachers. Feedback can be given using lots of different methods and we recognise that each has its own meaningful and valuable way of supporting students making progress. Teachers are encouraged to use a range of different feedback methods e.g. self assessment, peer assessment, whole class feedback, selecting the one which will enable the student to tackle subsequent work and secure further progress. Time is allocated within the lesson to review the marking and allow students the opportunity to respond to the feedback or seek further clarification. Students are equipped with the skills to edit and redraft their work and encouraged to check their own work using the success criteria. Effective feedback and marking combined motivates students and equips them with the specialist advice required to be able to achieve their full potential. Evidence of how effective the feedback is can be seen in future work. Students themselves are a crucial part of the marking/assessment process. The best examples of marking include teacher marking and assessment and student peer marking or class marking.

The school makes use of formative and summative assessment to secure students progress. There is a combination of classroom assessments and year group examinations. The GCSE grading system of 1- 9 is used to assess students from years 7 to 11. The 9-1 grids for each subject identify the knowledge, understanding and skills required for each grade. Assessment criteria is shared with students and scaffolding prepares students to be able to undertake the tasks independently over time. Assessment results are recorded into the school Go4school system in line with the school assessment calendar. Teachers also record assessment data in their own planners and in central departmental areas.

All teachers are responsible for ensuring improvements in students' literacy and teachers will correct common errors in punctuation, grammar and spelling. This may at times need to be balanced with highlighting only selective errors which reappear to ensure students are able to focus on the key misconceptions.

The quantity of marking varies by age group and subject. Typically subjects who see students more regularly will mark more frequently. Teachers are not expected to mark and award a mark / grade for every piece of work produced by students. As a school we are conscious of not creating unnecessary marking which could negatively affect the planning of future learning. Marking must always be a manageable balance for our teachers. There is no expectation that every page or piece of work needs to show teacher marking. The quality of marking is more important than the quantity but as a guideline we ask that teachers meet the following minimum expectations. Individual departments may also have their own marking policy in place which identifies which pieces of work are marked.

### **Monitoring of Teaching and Learning**

To ensure that our shared high expectations are maintained consistently and all learners receive the same excellent quality of education all leaders undertake a rigorous and robust monitoring of teaching and learning regularly throughout the academic year. This involves

- Lesson observations and Learning walks
- Work quality assurance checks
- Student voice

## **Lesson observations and Learning walks**

Lesson observations are at the heart of our teaching staff development programme. It is our central belief that we all learn from each other; indeed it is one of the most important tools in St Angela's improvement strategy. A climate of mutual classroom observation is fostered, and all colleagues are encouraged to observe other teachers and share good practice as often as possible.

The arrangements for lesson observations are as follows:

- All teaching staff are assigned to a member of SLT.
- Each member of SLT will conduct a full lesson observation of each member of his/her team once per term. These observations will be scheduled 5 working days in advance. Observations will be followed up with a formal feedback session which should take place within 5 working days of the observations.

In addition, Heads of Department & HOYs will arrange:

- Strategically planned "learning walks", wherein lessons will be observed. This also includes observations of PHSE & registrations.
- Internal departmental / team observations. Feedback will be provided by HODs / HOYs for these observations.

And also, where appropriate:

- Co-planned lesson observations, i.e. teacher A and teacher B co-plan a lesson which teacher A delivers. Teacher B watches the lesson and then the process is reversed for the second co-planned lesson.
- Observations of other members of staff from other departments

### **All lesson observations must include:**

- A detailed lesson plan, incorporating the departmental format.
- A seating plan from Go4schools which highlights the key groups of students in the class. This should contain recent data, or it should be provided separately.
- A copy of all resources used within the lesson including a copy of the powerpoint, differentiated resources.
- The availability of the teacher planner to assess teacher planning over time.
- The availability of student books/folders for review after the lesson observation to assess learning over time.

The school uses one lesson observation form for all observations. Following all observations a copy of this form must be returned to the Teaching and Learning team for whole school collation. A copy of the observation should also be provided to your HOD / Line Manager.

We place great emphasis on the vital importance of the delivery of quality feedback, time to really reflect on the practice and to agree on a focus for future development

## **Work quality assurance checks**

The high quality of work produced by students should be demonstrated in their exercise books, google folders and sixth form folders. All leaders monitor the quality of work to ensure it is in line with the department's sequence of learning and reflects the high challenge

expectation. Reports of this are shared with SLT line managers and any areas that require attention are addressed. The school has focus work scrutiny periods where they look at the work of specific groups.

### **Student Voice**

The views of our students are very important and contribute to our forward planning. Student voice is collated termly by the senior leadership team through a learning specific questionnaire. Each year group will be sent this questionnaire at strategic points in the year. The response data will then be analysed by the SLT and appropriate development points will then be fed back to Heads of Department. Other stakeholders' views such as parents are also captured and used to ensure the needs of all students are continuously being met.

### **Continued Professional Learning (CPL)**

Continued Professional Learning (CPL) remains key to building a reflective, skilled and highly effective staff community that is able to meet our teaching and learning expectations. We are committed to ensuring we provide school-led support using research evidence to improve our teaching practice and deliver the highest possible standards.

Everyone is a learner and there is a commitment for high quality professional development for all staff. All staff are expected to engage fully in CPL and take an active responsibility in their own professional development.

All of our in-school CPL is put together using the most up-to-date educational research and the wisdom and experience of school leaders and teachers with a track record of success. We regularly utilise research from organisations such as The Education Endowment Foundation. We nurture the talent from our own staff and share best practice at every opportunity. Key members of staff lead the CPL programmes and support our subject specialist staff to deliver high impact support and training.

As an outstanding school we are in a privileged and unique position to utilise this expertise to support our staff with further guidance and opportunities. Staff participate in additional CPL opportunities which include NPQS. In addition, our school membership of PTI, The National College, The Key and SSAT provides excellent high quality CPL support for all teachers ensuring we support all staff to deliver on our goals.