



POLICY DOCUMENT FRONTPAGE

Teaching and Learning Policy

CURRENT POLICY

APPROVED BY ALEC HUNTER LOCAL GOVERNING BODY

**THIS POLICY IS REVIEWED REGULARLY IN LINE WITH
RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES**



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1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain how we'll create an environment at our school where students learn best and love to do so
- Summarise expectations to make sure everyone is committed to achieving a consistent approach to teaching and learning across our school
- Promote high expectations and raising standards of achievement for all students in our school
- Involve students, parents and the wider school community in students' learning and development

2. Our Guiding Principles

Our mission is to serve our community by providing opportunities for all young people to progress, enjoy learning and fulfil their academic potential in a safe, caring environment that prepares them for a successful future. Teaching and Learning is firmly at the heart of our school. We believe that good teaching which promotes great learning, progress and enjoyment is the primary factor in raising standards.

We maintain that learning should be a challenging yet rewarding experience for everyone and we expect and guide students to play their part by being active, resilient, and committed to their studies. At Alec Hunter, we aim to provide a rich and varied diet of learning opportunities which allow our learners to develop their abilities to the full.

The core principles of our academy are:

- Giving our best, every minute of every lesson, every day
- Promoting high aspirations, confidence and self-belief
- Respecting ourselves, each other and our environment
- Valuing every person as an individual of equal worth
- Celebrating our successes in learning and beyond
- Developing positive, productive partnerships

Students learn best when they:

- Have their basic physical needs met
- Feel secure, safe, and valued
- Feel a sense of belonging to the group
- Are challenged, engaged, and motivated
- Can see the relevance and importance of what they are doing
- Can link what they are doing to other experiences and other learning
- Understand the task and instructions

- Are equipped, ready to learn and have access to the required teaching and learning materials
- Are not disrupted or distracted by others
- Participate in class discussions and respond to teacher questioning
- Can work with others or on their own, depending on the task
- Are guided, taught, or helped in appropriate ways at appropriate times
- Can practice what they are learning and master new skills
- Can apply the learning in both familiar and new contexts
- Revisit the knowledge and skills regularly, in class and at home, to improve long-term memory and retention
- Can persevere when learning is hard
- Can manage their emotions if things are not going well
- Recognise that all learners make mistakes and mistakes can help us learn

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Teaching and learning in our school is a shared responsibility, and everyone in our school community has an important role to play. As our Home School Agreement states, we believe that students will achieve more when everyone works together.

This is how we will always create the above conditions for students' learning

3.1 Teachers

Teachers are our school will:

- Follow the expectations for teaching and professional conduct as set out in the Teachers' Standards
- Actively engage parents/carers in their child's learning by clearly communicating the purpose of nature of home learning on Satchel One as per the Homework Policy
- Update parents/carers on students' progress on Go4Schools as per the school reporting as well as meet with parents at our calendared Parent/Carer Evenings.
- Meet the expectations set out in our Behaviour for Learning Policy, SEND Policy, Assessment, Feedback & Presentation Policy and Homework Policy

3.2. Support Staff

Support staff at our school will:

- Know students well and provide support to meet their individual learning needs
- Support teaching and learning with flexibility and resourcefulness
- Feedback observations of students to teachers

- Ask questions to make sure they've understood expectations for learning
- Identify and use resources to support learning
- Have high expectations and celebrate achievement
- Demonstrate and model themselves as learners
- Play a key role in developing and nurturing SEN student's metacognition skills
- Meet the expectations set out in SEND Policy and the Behaviour For Learning Policy

3.3. Curriculum Leaders

Curriculum Leaders at our school will:

- Create and share clear intentions for their subject with the teachers within their department
- Help to create challenging, well-sequenced, broad and balanced curriculum plans that build knowledge and skills
- Sequence lessons in a way that allows students to make good progress from their starting points
- Use their budget effectively to resource their subject, providing teachers with necessary resources for learning
- Drive improvement in their subject/phase, by regularly monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in their subject area through regular lesson drop-ins, book monitoring and pupil voice
- By working with teachers within their subject areas to identify any challenges and offer support where necessary
- Moderate progress across their department by, for example, systematically reviewing progress against a range of evidence and reviewing qualitative and quantitative performance data to determine strategies for continual improvement
- Encourage teachers to share ideas, resources, and good practice
- Meet the expectations set out in the Behaviour for Learning Policy, SEND Policy, Assessment, Feedback & Presentation Policy, and Homework Policy

3.4 Senior Leaders

Senior Leaders at our school will:

- Have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality, inclusive education to all
- Celebrate achievement and have high expectations for everyone
- Be visible around the school and offer support in lessons to ensure a safe, calm learning environment for all
- Hold staff and students to account for their teaching and learning by regularly monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning across the school
- Plan and evaluate strategies to secure high-quality teaching and learning across the school
- Provide support and guidance to staff through coaching and mentoring when required

- Input and monitor the impact of continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities to improve staff's practice and subject knowledge
- Address underachievement and intervene promptly
- Meet the expectations set out in Behaviour for Learning Policy, SEND Policy, Assessment, Feedback & Presentation Policy and Homework Policy

3.5 Students

It is our expectation that students at our school will:

- Take responsibility for their own learning, and support the learning of others
- Meet expectations for good behaviour for learning at all times, respecting the rights of others to learn
- Attend all lessons on time and be ready to learn, with all essential equipment for the lesson
- Be curious, ambitious, engaged and confident learners
- Know their targets and how to improve
- Put maximum effort and focus into their work
- Complete home learning activities as required
- Meet the expectations set out in Behaviour for Learning Policy, Homework Policy and the Home-School Agreement

3.6 Parents and Carers

Parents and Carers of students at our school should support learning and progress by:

- Valuing the learning that takes place at Alec Hunter Academy
- Encouraging their child as a learner
- Making sure their child is ready, equipped, and able to learn every day
- Supporting in good attendance and punctuality
- Engaging in information and discussions about their child's progress and attainment through regularly accessing Go4Schools and attending Parent/Carer Evenings
- Communicating with the school to share important information promptly
- Providing resources as required to support learning
- Encouraging their child to take responsibility for their own learning
- Supporting and giving importance to home learning as per the Homework Policy
- Meeting the expectations as set out in the Home-School Agreement

3.7 Governors

Governors at our school will:

- Monitor that resources and funding are allocated effectively to support the school's approach to teaching and learning
- Monitor the impact of teaching and learning strategies on students' progress and attainment
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation
- Make sure other school policies promote high-quality teaching, and that these are being implemented

4. High Quality Teaching and Learning Strategies

According to the Education Endowment Foundation, "the best available evidence indicates that great teaching is the most important level schools have to improve outcomes for their students" (2022)

Lessons will be planned well to ensure good short-, medium- and long-term progress. Teachers at Alec Hunter Academy will use a variety of teaching and learning strategies and pedagogical approaches to guide and promote student progress.

Below are some of the key strategies that teachers at Alec Hunter are encouraged to adopt regularly in their lesson planning and delivery:

Build Positive and Kind Relationships:

Relationships in the classroom should be positive, professional and kind. Positive relationships are built on fairness, kindness, respect and consistency to build a secure, safe learning environment where students feel able to thrive

Set High Challenging Expectations:

We have high expectations of the students at Alec Hunter Academy. We believe our students are capable of excellence and far more than they themselves realise. Teachers are encouraged to plan lessons which are challenging and encourage students to think hard. Teachers will introduce high-level academic vocabulary and texts in lessons and expect students to use this in their writing and speaking. We want students to read widely and will promote a love of reading across the school. Teachers have high expectations of student behaviour and engagement with the learning. When the work does not meet expectations, teachers may ask students to improve or redo the work if necessary

Provide Explicit and Clear Teacher Instruction:

Students should be taught and shown how to do things in a clear and structured way. It is also important that students understand why they are learning what they are learning as this will help them make better progress and understand its value

Manage Cognitive Load:

Studies have shown that the working memory can become overloaded if the learning is not broken down into manageable chunks and tasks. Teachers are encouraged to use a variety of methods to breakdown complex information for students to process the information and ensure it is transferred to their long-term memory. This might be seen through the setting of structured comprehensive tasks, using notetaking strategies to break down large texts such as mind-mapping or using sorting tasks like Venn diagrams. Curriculum Leaders will give consideration to the sequencing of their curriculum in order to ensure that lessons are well ordered, and students can make connections to what they have learned before

Support by using Models & Scaffolds:

Teachers will provide model answers and examples of excellent work so that students are able to understand what they are working towards. Teachers may use a variety of techniques to model the work to the students such as live modelling (completing the task or solving the problem live in front of the class), providing worked examples or exemplar model answers. The aim of this is to set the standard that teachers are expecting from students. Ultimately however, students will need to be able to complete tasks independently and to help students achieve this, they may also provide scaffolds to build confidence. Examples of scaffolds might be sentence starters, writing frames, partially worked examples, or providing work banks or knowledge organisers for students to refer to. Eventually this should build students confidence and they will be set similar tasks to complete independently

Ask Questions that Engage All Learners:

Teachers at Alec Hunter Academy will employ a range of questioning techniques to engage all students and check for understanding. Traditional questioning techniques such as “hands-up” may be occasionally used, however this can lead to a small sample of students engaging with the questions. Therefore, teachers will also use a no “hands-up” approach – sometimes referred to as “cold calling” to select students around the room. Teachers will ensure students have a suitable amount of “thinking time” before selecting students to respond and they may also use techniques such as “think-pair-share” to allow students to confer before giving their response. Teachers are not trying to catch students out through these techniques but rather showing students that they have high expectations of them and that they expect students to engage and respond to the learning. Students will be encouraged to respond using academic vocabulary and extended responses and if their verbal responses could be improved, then students should be guided to better their response.

Build Long-Term Memory:

Studies have shown that students can easily forget what they have learned if they do not revisit it. Teachers will plan retrieval practice and spaced learning activities throughout the curriculum, the more frequently the better. Teachers will also ensure that students know how to revise their subject at home and ensure that students have the right materials they need to revise successfully. Students will be guided on a variety of ways to remember and revise content knowledge to be successful in the future.

Assess to Check Understanding & Intervene:

Teachers will use a variety of assessment methods to diagnose learning gaps. Most assessment opportunities will be low stakes such as through retrieval quizzes and activities. Teachers will also use checkpoints in the lesson to ask questions to allow students to feedback their levels of understanding. For example, students may be asked a range of comprehension questions, or they ask students to use “show-me-boards” to check answers. At various points throughout the Assessment cycle, teachers will set pieces of work that need to be assessed and graded. Teachers should use this information to identify students that may need/require further supportive intervention strategies

Feed Forward through Formative Feedback:

Formative Feedback is feedback that informs the student in how to improve. Formative Feedback can be given in many ways by the teacher. Most formative feedback will be spoken by the teacher and happen “live” in the lesson whereby the teacher will immediately offer guidance and intervene when students need support. Some feedback may be directed towards the whole class when a large proportion of the class have found something difficult. At other times, students may receive written feedback following a piece of work that they have completed or following an assessment. Whenever written feedback is given, students should be encouraged to act on this and respond if it is to have value. When an assessment is completed by students, they should complete a Growth Task in green pen/font that is a responsive task to the feedback they have been given which helps the student to make progress

Promote Metacognition and Self-Regulation:

Metacognition is when students think about their own-learning. Metacognitive strategies can help students, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds to make rapid progress. When students are regularly encouraged to think about how they learn and ways to overcome learning issues, they can make progress. Teachers should model metacognitive talk by showing students how they think or prepare before they attempt to solve a learning problem. Teachers should support students to “plan, monitor and evaluate” their own learning by modelling this to them and encouraging them to this independently

5. The Learning Environment

When students are at school, learning will take place in a range of learning environments such as classrooms, laboratories, technology and art rooms, music rooms, ICT suites and indoor and outdoor sporting areas. These spaces will be kept safe, clean, and ready for students to use them.

They will be arranged to promote learning in a variety of ways such as:

- Displaying key academic works to support Literacy
- Displaying posters of material students have previously learned about and can identify
- Providing accessible resources for learning such as books, worksheets, and other equipment
- Using seating layouts that allows everyone to see the board and participate
- Celebrate high quality work by putting it on display

6. Differentiation

Teaching and learning at our school will take the backgrounds, needs and abilities of all students into account. Whilst fostering the highest expectations of all students, we will differentiate learning to cater the needs of all our students, including:

- Students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- Students with English as an additional language (EAL)

The main strategies we will use to promote learning for all our students are:

- High Quality Teaching (strategies mentioned above in Section 4)
- Using support staff effectively to provide extra support
- Working with our SEN co-ordinator (SENCO), our students with SEND, and their parents to establish the appropriate level of material to support these students to make good progress
- Using ability groupings for certain subjects where appropriate
- Scaffolding techniques such as writing frames and word banks

7. Home Learning (Homework)

Home learning, or homework, will support students to make the link between what they have learnt in school and the wider world. It's most effective when done in a supportive, secure environment, with focused time set aside

All home learning will be made available on Satchel One (an online homework setting tool that can be accessed on a device or desktop/laptop). Students and Parents have access to Satchel One to monitor the work that has been set, the homework deadlines and whether work has been submitted or not

Home learning will be reasonable in challenge and length, and the instructions will be clearly outlined alongside each task

Further information about Home Learning (including information about the amount and frequency of homework set at each Key Stage) can be found in our Homework Policy

8. Assessment, Feedback & Reporting

Feedback will clearly explain to students what they're doing well and what they need to do next to continue to improve their work. Written feedback will not be given for every piece of work or homework that students complete. Teachers should explain to students which work will be given written formative feedback or will be assessed and graded. Most feedback that students will receive will be verbal and in class throughout the learning process. Students may also receive feedback from their peers or be encouraged to learn how to self-assess and improve their work

Students will be assessed termly or half-termly in their subjects depending on their Key Stage and their teachers will provide written feedback in line with the frequency outlined in the Assessment, Feedback and Presentation Policy

Students are encouraged to set their own ambitious targets for each subject based on their prior attainment. These targets are meant to encourage and drive students to own their own progress and aim to meet or exceed these targets. Teachers will check student progress throughout the year and will provide regular current grades for students on our reporting system on Go4Schools. Teachers will also provide verbal reports against these at parents' evenings throughout the year

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

We will monitor teaching and learning in our school to make sure that all our students make the best possible progress from their starting points

Senior Leaders and Curriculum Leaders will monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching on students' learning through:

- Conducting Teaching & Learning walks
- Reviewing marking and feedback
- Conducting regular student progress meetings
- Gathering input from the school council and wider student voice
- Planning work scrutinies
- Participating in whole-school and department reviews within the Trust

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Senior Leader in charge of Teaching and Learning. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full Local Governing Body

11. Links with Other Policies

This policy links with the following policies and procedures:

- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Assessment, Feedback & Presentation Policy
- Homework Policy
- Literacy & Oracy Policy
- Home-school Agreement