



**Kidsgrove**  
**Learning Campus**  
INSPIRE INNOVATE CREATE



# Teaching and Learning, and Homework Policy

**Drafted By**  
**Date of Approval**  
**Approved By**  
**Review Date**

Mrs L Weaver  
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Academy Council  
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## 1. Context

The classroom is at the heart of everything we do at The Kidsgrove Secondary School, and we want our students to achieve their full potential by making good progress. The most important factor in supporting students to make good progress is high-quality teaching and supporting the students to know how to improve their learning and how to act on the feedback that is provided to them. This is underpinned by the following:

- **What do students already know?**
- **What do students need to know?**
- **How will they get there?**

## 2. Aim of the policy

The aim of the policy is to ensure consistently high-quality teaching across our academy in every classroom, every lesson, and every day. This policy is for all teachers at The Kidsgrove Secondary School: it provides the rationale and expectations for teaching and learning. It is not intended to restrict creativity and practice in the classroom but is to be used as the foundation for promoting outstanding learning experiences and to create a climate for cognitive agility.

All teachers are expected to know their students and have high expectations of what they can achieve, demonstrating a growth mind-set to student learning and progress.

Planning for sequences of lessons should be planned to cover the required content, knowledge, or skills; teaching the lesson; using opportunities to assess what students have learnt and analysing those outcomes; reflecting and adapting teaching considering the assessment findings; and then feeding those reflections into content for future lessons.

This simple, but effective model of teaching and learning will help to ensure that we are preparing our students for the next stage in their development by meeting the demands of the curriculum, but also that we are engaging with effective assessment for learning to be able to adapt to the needs of our learners. Lessons should not be taught without being carefully reviewed and adapted considering what we know about the learners in our classrooms.

**T&L CODE**

## OUR TEACHING AND LEARNING CODE

- OUR STUDENTS ARE CHALLENGED AT ALL ABILITIES SO THAT THEY MAKE GOOD PROGRESS.
- OUR STUDENTS WILL BE ENGAGED IN LEARNING FROM THE VERY START OF OUR LESSONS.
- OUR BOOKS WILL SHOW QUALITY LEARNING, TEACHING AND FEEDBACK.
- OUR PLANNING WILL BE INFORMED AND WILL SCAFFOLD, SUPPORT, STRETCH AND ENGAGE STUDENTS.
- OUR ROOMS WILL BE ENVIRONMENTS WHERE ALL LEARNERS WILL THRIVE.

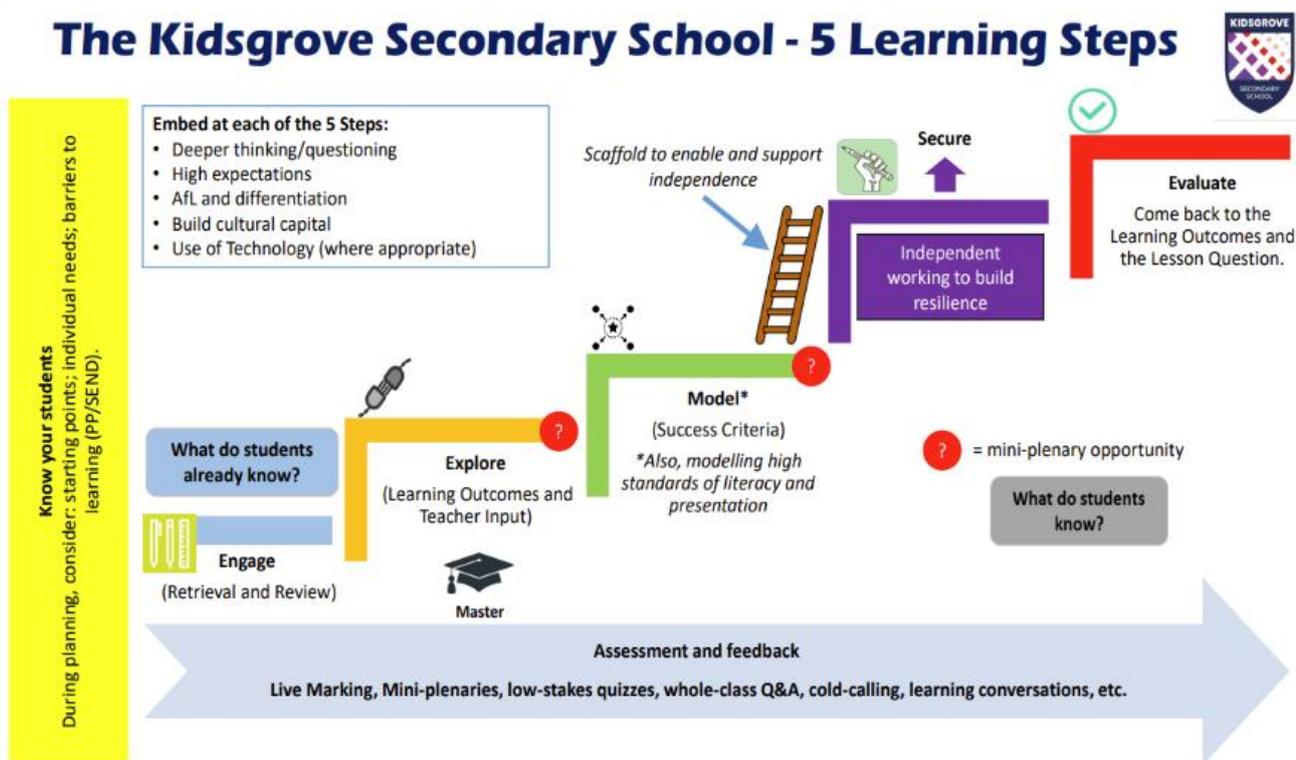
KIDSGROVE SECONDARY SCHOOL

Shaw Education Trust

The approaches in this policy have been developed to ensure high levels of consistency and to secure high-quality teaching for all our students across the full curriculum. This is only possible through a determined, collaborative approach, where all colleagues embed these practices into their lessons and all lessons are rooted in the learning steps outlined below.

### 3. The Kidsgrove Secondary School - 5 'Learning Steps' Teaching and Learning Framework

The 5 Learning Steps should be used to inform all planning, whether this is a scheme of learning or an individual lesson. When planning the 5 Learning Steps, teachers will consider and anticipate: common misconceptions; potential barriers and how they can be addressed; lesson content and where a greater depth of learning can be achieved; and opportunities to assess students and provide feedback on a regular basis. This framework may run for a single lesson or for a cycle of several lessons. There is flexibility within the order of which some of these steps are arranged.



The journey of the 5 lesson steps is as follows:

#### Engage

This is the hook for the lesson and should be planned to be completed as soon a student enters and sits down to work. Teachers use this step to address the retrieval of connected knowledge to the lesson through 'Retrieval and Review'.

#### Explore

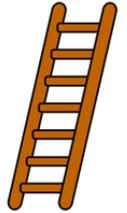
All lesson titles are a lesson question. This ignites deeper thinking and supports higher level questioning. The teacher will lead the lesson introduction; they will explain essential concepts and terminology, demonstrating how these ideas connect to the broader subject matter. Clearly defined learning outcomes will outline what students are expected to know or achieve by the end of the lesson. This process will be reinforced through targeted questioning and ongoing Assessment for Learning, providing guidance and making progress visible throughout the lesson.

## Model

To allow students to fully understand the instructions and their new learning it is important that teachers model and share the lesson 'Success Criteria'. This gives students an understanding of what is expected of them and what is needed to achieve this. Modelling is key to support progress and enabling students to succeed. Teachers will use live modelling with use of explicit teaching through methods such as 'I do, we do, you do'. They will use these opportunities to discuss metacognitive methods to approaching tasks.

At KS4 this should be exam related where possible and linked to exam criteria.

The **ladder** in the learning steps framework is used to represent the steps that teachers take to ensure that students can complete independent tasks confidently e.g., has scaffolding been put in place to support? Teachers may consider what personalised support would be offered here to ensure that students independently achieve the desired result. The teachers will offer challenge, and students are expected to achieve the highest possible quality of work.



## Secure

This step is the student's opportunity to show what they can do and have learnt in the lesson. This is a key step in the process. For Key Stage 4 students it may be appropriate for the teacher to provide opportunities for exam practice, opportunities for students to deepen their thinking and depth of thinking. The teacher will insist on student displaying resilience of understanding through a **silent task at some point during this step**. The 'resilience' here is the students being able to work using their own knowledge and skills. The teacher may ask that students to work in a group to investigate together and learn from each other. However, at times and in most lessons, it will be essential that students work alone to show their own understanding and ability to answer the lesson question.

## Evaluate

This step links clearly to the lesson question and the learning outcomes. Students can now at this point answer a particular exam question and/or show a good understand of a key concept/s. This is integral to teachers when planning their next lesson by gauging if the learning outcome has been achieved. It is a key element in reflecting on the learning that has taken place and adapting lessons accordingly.

## 4. Assessment and feedback leading to continuous reflection, review and adaptation

Our model has been developed to ensure a model of a continuous review of the curriculum and pupils' journey through it. Throughout the lesson, checking, assessment, feedback and reflection will be crucial so that the teacher can check that students are on track and identify misconceptions to allow early interventions. This will be built in throughout the lesson through questioning, live marking and will be evident in the work that the students are producing. This should inform future lessons and provide insight into topics that need to be revisited.

CPD has focused upon questioning techniques, and we see cold calling, no-opt out, no hands up and Socratic questioning as part of our school's ethos.

Staff utilise a range of methods to check students' knowledge and understanding. Whole class methods are used to quickly assess students' understanding, provide immediate feedback, and keep everyone engaged in the learning process in a timely and effective manner.

## 5. Standards of literacy and presentation in student work

As part of the model step in the framework, students should be shown exemplary standards of presentation of work and high levels of literacy. However, a focus on literacy and presentation should go beyond this and should permeate all lessons and tasks set. Students should be taught the importance of proper planning, forethought, and consideration of their work before committing to writing. The importance of taking pride in their work, and the impression poor presentation gives to others should be emphasised.

All planning should consider literacy and the needs of the students: whether this be anticipating difficult vocabulary in the lesson and presenting students with a glossary of key subject specific words, supporting students by showing/modelling how to set out and label a table or graph, or enabling students to work in pairs to support each other with checking literacy in work. We should aim to **“plan every lesson with the language demands and key words in mind”** to ensure students are not unnecessarily hindered by avoidable barriers to their learning. Consider your lessons from the students’ perspective and consider where literacy may prove a stumbling block in them accessing the learning. Presentation expectations and literacy has been referenced in our marking and feedback policy.

## 6. Know your students

When planning lessons, teachers should use their knowledge of individual students within their classes to ensure all students achieve their potential. This includes understanding of:

- Starting points (KS2 data, CAT4 data, previous test data, reading ages, gaps in knowledge, what they currently know, performance last lesson, in-lesson opportunities to gauge and direct learning)
- Individual needs (e.g., SEND, EAL)
- Potential barriers to learning (e.g., Pupil Premium)

### 6a. What we would expect to see at The Kidsgrove Secondary School

Staff have access to contextual data for all their students via Arbor and SISRA, so that teachers are aware of any specific needs.

- For SEND students, the student Road Map, EHCP and pupil passport profiles must be referred to for advice and guidance on how best to support an individual’s learning. Pupil snapshot bookmarks have been completed so we are able to ensure that this is implemented into our daily planning and lesson delivery.
- Continuous Reflection and Performance Reporting processes will guide teachers in terms of addressing progress such as gaps in learning and misconceptions. It is important that there is a focus on knowledge being gained and this then being revisited and improved upon regularly.
- Pupil Premium students are catered for through anticipation of gaps in knowledge, life experiences, and resources at home.
- Higher ability students will be supported and challenged through the scaffolding in lessons. Teaching should be targeted to the highest grades within the class and support offered to help students achieve those points.

### 6b. Adaptive Teaching

Student learning should be adapted based on prior knowledge of the students (performance in previous lessons, learning needs, results from assessments, etc.). All lessons should be planned with learners in mind and responding to the needs of the students. At Kidsgrove Secondary School, we use the approach that all students should ‘Master’ each lesson and every specific lesson question. All learners are provided with support to ensure that they make progress in lesson and can ‘Evaluate’ their learning.

We utilise a range of informed adaptive teaching methods. The usual of visual checklists is a powerful tool to scaffold tasks to support all students to achieve. Seating plans are data and progress informed to ensure

the effective use of pole position and targeted approaches. The use of flexible groupings is used to support adaptation, boost engagement and promote an inclusive and effective learning environment that supports all students to reach their full potential. These are not exhaustive and are used alongside a range of other methods.

## 7. Assessment and feedback – please see marking and feedback policy

Assessment falls broadly into two categories:

- **Continuous Reflection** (used to inform daily teaching and learning - formative), this should be ongoing and present in most lessons. It identifies what students know or what misconceptions they may have so that these can be quickly addressed and built upon, constantly checking that students understand what has been taught.
- **Performance Assessment** (used to sum up what the students know – summative) will take place two times a year in a calendared examination period. The examination will be designed to dominantly assess what has been taught since the previous examination and will also have a minor focus on sampling prior knowledge from previous terms and previous years.

## 8. Homework

### Rationale

At The Kidsgrove Secondary School, we expect students to work hard. We also expect them to work efficiently, in school and at home too. We want students to do useful things with their time. In writing this policy, we have used The Education Endowment Foundation Toolkit - a major source of research-based evidence on all aspects of school life.

This Independent Study policy is designed to help students learn by using the most effective strategies. In schools where learning to complete at home is set, students tend to perform better. The EEF has found that, on average, **homework at secondary school makes the same difference as an extra five months of classroom teaching per year.** We expect students and families to understand the benefits of this. Imagine two students at the same ability in year 7. One of them does their Independent Study and the other does not. By the end of year 11, the difference between them is two years' worth of learning. Students who do not get in the habit of completing tasks gradually fall behind until they are too far behind to catch up. If left unchecked, not even the best intervention can close this gap. The most important things that families can do at home to support their children's education is to ensure that they are safe, well cared for, and that they complete their Independent Study.

The Independent Study policy is both simple and flexible:

### **Record of homework**

Homework is referenced on Arbor. Deadline dates will be found here with a brief reference to the homework. Student homework is completed through Showbie.

### **Regularity**

Subjects will generally set homework once per fortnight, as well as tasks to be done over the holidays. Subjects which are taught most frequently, such as English, maths and science may require tasks more frequently. Sometimes, students working on an extended project have a longer deadline, but they might have to show their progress each week.

### **Deadlines of tasks**

Most subjects will allow a minimum of four days for tasks to be completed so that students can organise their workload. Homework will not be set with a 'next day' deadline.

### **Format of Homework**

The EEF toolkit identifies that "homework is most effective when used as a short and focused intervention", and that "in the most effective examples homework was an integral part of learning, rather than an add-on". Also, "a variety of tasks with different levels of challenge is likely to be beneficial".

The format and level of challenge of homework will vary between subjects. For example, some lessons will require skills practice; others might require students to read around the subject.

**At The Kidsgrove Secondary School, the minimum expectation is that homework is set as a low-stakes retrieval task where students are given questions that they will be asked the following/a future lesson and are expected to revisit content and learn the responses to those questions.**

### **Homework Support**

Homework tasks, if judged correctly, should have a range of levels of challenge. Sometimes students become stuck, but this is not a bad thing. Being stuck provides a chance to overcome a barrier, but there is also help available.

A staffed **Homework Club** is available for students every day **at dinner time** to support them with the completion of their homework. Students may opt to attend Homework Club or may be referred by staff to attend should homework be incomplete or below the expected standard.

Students can also email their teachers if they are stuck. This allows the teacher to get feedback on how hard their class felt the task was. They may provide a hint or even re-teach some of the work in class.

Students must let their teacher know if there is a problem with meeting a deadline as soon as possible, with a good reason. Teachers will be sympathetic and may extend a deadline if a student asks in good time.

## 9. Monitoring and evaluation

We are committed to developing an “open door” culture, where monitoring is purposeful, provides useful feedback and impacts positively upon student outcomes and staff development. We believe that transparency is key; staff need to fully understand what we are doing, why and how. Our monitoring and evaluation allow us to meet our obligations for formal reporting on the quality of teaching and learning whilst also informing action plans and CPD.

## 10. Our Learning Environments

We take great pride in our School and learning environments. We ensure that our teaching areas are organised and tidy to support an effective learning culture and that displays are engaging and meaningful whilst also reflecting a range of pupils’ achievements.

## 11. Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning

Monitoring teaching and learning is essential to ensure high-quality education and continuous improvement in student outcomes.

**Ensures Effective Teaching** – Regular monitoring helps identify strengths and areas for improvement in teaching strategies, ensuring that lessons are engaging and effective.

**Improves Student Progress** – By tracking learning outcomes, teachers can adjust their methods to better support students, addressing gaps in understanding and enhancing overall achievement.

**Supports Professional Development** – Observations and feedback provide valuable insights for teachers, helping them refine their skills and adopt best practices.

**Maintains Consistency & Standards** – Monitoring ensures that educational standards are met across classrooms, creating a fair and consistent learning experience for all students.

**Encourages Reflection & Growth** – Both teachers and students benefit from self-reflection and feedback, fostering a culture of continuous learning and development.

**Informs Decision-Making** – Data from monitoring helps school leaders make informed decisions about curriculum improvements, resource allocation, and staff training.

By regularly evaluating teaching and learning, schools create an environment that promotes excellence, supports both students and teachers, and drives overall educational success. We carry this out using a variety of methods:

- **Work scrutiny** – These take place throughout the year and have a specific focus. Following work being submitted, staff will collectively monitor, assess and then feedback on the work scrutiny. These will be both exercise book and digital workbook looks
- **Learning walks** – These are drop-ins and will have different foci depending on current needs and CPD topics.
- **Observations** – These are calendared at the beginning of the academic year. Communication will occur prior to the observation; evidence will be observed to support evaluative comments and then reflection will occur following the observation.
- **Environment checks** – These are calendared and check the quality of our environment and to ensure it is conducive of a positive learning and teaching environment.

- **Student Voice** – These are carried out by both Subject Leads and through the Teaching and Learning lead to gauge student's perceptions of teaching and learning and the lesson areas they are engaging in.

## **Appendix of key terms used throughout the policy**

**AfL:** Assessment for Learning. This is similar to diagnosis in that teachers use a range of tasks, questions, feedback to determine how much students have learnt and what they need to move on to. However, where diagnosis simply determines where gaps in learning are, AfL will inform changes within the lesson, changes to future lessons to address weaknesses, and changes to entire schemes of work. AfL should permeate every lesson and be used constantly to direct support and challenge where it is needed.

**Lesson Question:** a question which addresses what students need to know from a topic or unit of work. This should address key knowledge, skills, and contextual information needed by the student. The ability of the students to be able to answer this question is the core aim of the scheme of work/series of lessons and as such all lessons should build to support students in understanding the issues and processes surrounding this question.

**Adaptive Teaching:** provision of different versions of a task or resource to support students with different needs or at different points of the 5 learning steps. This may be provision of a harder, challenge task for students finding the work too easy, or extra teacher support for a student struggling to understand the lesson. This will be identified by continuous reflection and performance reflection.

**Homework:** The Kidsgrove Secondary School terminology for work completed by students at home to supplement the learning taking place in the classroom.

**Scaffolding:** support put in place to help students to achieve the requirements of a task. Examples include sentence starters, prompts, pre-populated tables, etc. This should give students a framework to support their learning and assist them in achieving at the same level of their peers, albeit with a little more support. The aim should be that scaffolding is a temporary measure to be gradually withdrawn as students progress.

**Success Criteria:** a list of requirements for students to be able to succeed in a given task. It may be that students need to consider key vocabulary in their response, or set it out in a particular way, but success criteria should provide guidance and a useful 'tick list' for students to check that they have met all the necessary points to succeed.

**Fix It:** Lessons resulting from an assessment or period of diagnosis where students are provided with opportunities to make corrections to previous work, address weaknesses in learning, and aim to improve on prior attainment. This may be one lesson where you want to address some misconceptions from last lesson or could be several lessons following an assessment where you want to cover areas where several students made mistakes or lost marks.

It is important that teachers begin by establishing what students already know, or can do, using assessment data or through questioning in a previous lesson. This will ensure there is sufficient challenge, and students are continuing to improve.