

# FHS

Francis Holland Schools

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## **Learning and Teaching Policy**

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# Learning and Teaching Policy

## **This policy applies to:**

**Francis Holland Regent's Park**

**Francis Holland Sloane Square**

**Francis Holland Prep**

Where there are differences between the schools these have been clearly highlighted.

## **Related Policies:**

Curriculum Policy

Marking Policies

### **1. Introduction**

Learning is central to a school's life and discussion of learning and teaching should be a high priority and a continuous process. People learn differently and students should be treated as individuals. Moreover, it is recognised that physical and emotional well-being as well as self-esteem are critical to the process of learning. Students should feel successful and will flourish where they are treated positively by teachers, and as such their well-being is central to all learning and teaching. Learning will be promoted when teachers themselves are seen to be committed to and experts in their subjects and when students perceive that teachers are learners too.

### **2. A Definition of Learning**

Learning is individual and it takes place in different ways. It is making personal sense of something. It is an active process and demands that learners do something at a cognitive level. It makes intellectual and creative demands on students. Genuine learning is not simply a transference of information but should spark curiosity and a desire for learning more and more.

Learning involves engagement, challenge, and thinking. It is about understanding and memory, about acquiring, developing, and applying skills, and about analysis and problem solving. Learning takes place in academic, social, emotional and physical areas. Much learning takes place outside the classroom, including in the home and in pursuing co-curricular activities.

### **3. Aims**

- For the students:
  - To learn effectively at the cognitive level.
  - To be autonomous learners with a strong sense of agency – to be motivated, confident, independent, responsible for their own work, stretched, challenged, questioning, curious, creative, prepared to take risks, knowing when to work as an individual and when in a team.
  - To have the tools to be successful in their learning and to acquire skills for future learning.
  - To appreciate the importance of meta-cognition and learning to learn.
- For the school:
  - To have learning as a high priority, with teachers who talk about learning and keep abreast of research on learning.

- To have teachers who increase the self-esteem and confidence of students by treating them as individuals and by having a positive approach that enhances their well-being and nurtures their development.
- To recognise the importance of differentiation and the needs of every individual pupil (especially those with SEND), adapting teaching accordingly to make teaching as effective and engaging as possible.

- **Procedures**

- Teachers talk about learning and share good practice
- Departments should discuss the specific issue of learning needs, including SEND and stretch and challenge, in their meetings. This might involve individual students as well as more general learning strategies.
- Learning is discussed in staff meetings and teachers who have gone on training courses can inform the rest of the staff of matters concerned with learning.

## 4. Review

Policy author/s	RP: Deputy Head Academic SSq: Senior Deputy Head Teaching and Learning Prep: Deputy Head (Curriculum and Co-Curriculum)
This review	Autumn 2025
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The Francis Holland Schools Trust is an educational charity which manages three leading independent girls' schools in central London, across three sites.

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## Appendix 1: Learning and Teaching at Francis Holland Regent's Park

### Procedures followed:

- Teachers talk about learning and share good practice
- The SLT, including the Academic Deputy Head, receives minutes of all department meetings
- Some INSET days and staff meeting times are used for developing understanding of learning.
- All staff take part in half-termly Teaching and Learning CPD. Each year, the Assistant Head Teaching and Learning reviews the needs of teaching staff and plans the year's training accordingly. Based on need, areas of focus are agreed in the Summer Term and external and internal speakers are organised. Action Research is also strongly encouraged.
- Learning is discussed in Academic Board and Heads of Department meetings where there is sharing of best practice and a focus on research-informed approaches to teaching and learning
- The teacher in charge of learning enhancement (SENCO) regularly informs the staff about learning, specifically adaptive teaching techniques, with reference to those with specific learning needs.
- PSHE and the Life Programme are used to develop effective learning in students
- The students learn about learning in PSHE from the Thirds (year 7) to the Upper Fourth (year 9); additionally, the Fifth Form and Sixth Form have sessions on effective learning during their Life Programme.
- Pupils with specific learning difficulties are identified and their progress is monitored.
- Students discuss their learning with their tutors in their 1:1 conversations which occur four times a year.
- Heads of Department monitor teaching and learning through departmental educational quality assurance processes which include lesson observations and learning walks, work scrutiny and discussions with staff and students.
- Heads of Department track student progress, including those with SEND and those who have been identified as able, gifted and talented.
- Departments are encouraged to implement the Trust's digital strategy to support learning and most pupils in Years 7 – 9 will have a MS Surface device which will enable them to use O365 and Microsoft Teams in their learning
- Learning and teaching is enhanced by the school digital strategy designed around O365 and the MS Surface.

The Academic Deputy Head, Assistant Head of Teaching and Learning, and Head of Learning Enhancement work closely together to promote effective learning in the school. They also work with Heads of Department to identify very able students and to coordinate programmes designed to stretch and challenge these individuals. These are detailed in the Stretch and Challenge Booklet which is updated annually alongside subject department pages which signpost enrichment activities for pupils. Initial identification of both those with learning needs and able, gifted and talented students is done via MidYIS testing on entry to the school as well as the results of continuous assessments throughout a pupil's school career. More details of the school's provision for able, gifted and talented students is provided in the Curriculum Policy.

## Appendix 2: Learning and Teaching at Francis Holland Sloane Square

In particular, the school places emphasis upon learning that enables pupils to develop the 7 Cs: Curiosity, confidence, creativity, communication, collaboration, craftsmanship and commitment

### Procedures

- Teachers talk about learning and share good practice within staff meetings, through our staff development programme and through individualised CPD.
- The Head, the Senior Deputy Head (Teaching and Learning), and the Deputy Head Academic (DHA) receive minutes of all department meetings, which facilitates the effective communication and monitoring of discussions about teaching and learning.
- Part of each development days is used for enhancing understanding of learning and sharing good practice for professional development.
- Some staff meetings are focussed on 'learning from each other' which enables teachers to collaborate and support each other in their development as practitioners.
- Learning and teaching working parties are convened as required by the SDH (TL) or the DHA to discuss aspects of whole school practice. The SDH (TL) or the DHA reports back to the Senior Leadership Team and then when appropriate, to the Heads of Department and the rest of the staff. Such working parties are made up of Heads of Department from a range of subjects and examples include work on the grading and reporting strategy and the whole school marking policy.
- The Head of Learning Strategies informs the staff about learning with reference to those with specific learning needs.
- The SDH (TL) and DHA work with the Head of Academic Enrichment to ensure an engaging programme is in place across the school for pupils who are able, gifted and talented. This includes co-curricular clubs such as the 1881 curiosity club for years 7-9 and the Scholastic Society for years 10-UVI.
- Heads of Department meetings are a particularly important forum for the development of whole school practice.

### Departments' focus on learning

- Pupils with specific learning needs are identified and progress is monitored.
- The school places a significant emphasis upon subject specialist Learning Support and suitable preparation enables some girls with specific needs to access the curriculum.
- Whole school marking symbols make it easier for pupils to access feedback from their teachers. This is currently under review for 2025/26.
- GROW (Girls reflect on work) time is incorporated into lessons to encourage girls to engage with written feedback. During GROW time girls respond to their teacher's comments using green pen.
- Departments will develop their own systems of whole year group tracking as supported by the sharing of exemplar work in heads of department meetings and guided by the Assistant Head Assessment and Data (AHAD).

### Digital Learning

- Departments implement the school's digital learning strategy which aims to support pupils' learning and provide opportunities to develop and practise digital skills.

- Departments follow the guidelines governing use of technology in lessons and at home with Years 7-9.
- Departments use technology innovatively and where it enhances learning, whilst ensuring sensible limits to pupil screen usage. Opportunities are given in lessons and prep to develop analogue and digital skills.
- Departments follow guidance on sharing digital resources with pupils via Teams and other Microsoft 365 tools.
- Prep in Year 10+ is set using Teams assignments.

Wellbeing and the Learning to Learn programme are used to develop effective learning in students

- The school's Learning to Learn programme is integrated across years 7 – UVI. It is led by the Head of Academic Mentoring and enables girls to be more self-aware in their learning as they become adept at meta-cognitive skills.
- The programme also provides practical advice at key junctures in each girl's academic career and seeks to inform and utilise parents in this journey.

The SDH (TL), DHA, AHAD, Heads of Year, Head of Learning Strategies and Head of Academic Mentoring work closely together to promote effective learning in the school including differentiation for all. They also work with Heads of Department to identify the most able and to coordinate programmes designed to stretch and challenge these individuals. They are supported by the AHAD who identifies the particular needs of each pupil through their analysis of PASS, MidYIS and ALIS testing and the results of continuous assessments throughout a student's school career.

## Appendix 3: Learning and Teaching at Francis Holland Prep

The Prep School places emphasis upon learning that enables pupils to develop the 8 Cs: Curiosity, confidence, creativity, communication, collaboration, craftsmanship and compassion.

The Prep School also places emphasis upon learning through the growth mindset, enabling pupils to not be risk averse with their learning, but understanding the benefit of learning through mistakes as well.

### Procedures

- Teachers talk about learning and share good practice, within Prep Staff Meetings, And through our individualised CPD programme. Some Development days are used for enhancing understanding of learning and sharing good practice for professional development.
- Learning and teaching working parties are convened as required by the Prep School SLT to discuss aspects of whole school practice. Such working parties are made up either of the Class Teachers and their Teaching Assistants, or of Prep School Heads of Department and examples include work on Quick Quiz assessments for help in monitoring progress or the Prep School marking policy.
- The Prep School Head of Learning Strategies informs the staff about learning with reference to those with specific learning needs.
- The Deputy Heads work together with the Prep School teachers to ensure an engaging programme is in place across the school for pupils who are able, gifted and talented.
- Whole school marking symbols make it easier for pupils to access feedback from their teachers and form a key part of the Prep School's approach to feedback and marking, which is reviewed annually. Embed and refine the practice of **adaptive teaching and learning** across the curriculum, ensuring that teachers respond dynamically to pupils' needs, prior knowledge, and learning behaviours. Rather than relying on fixed differentiation strategies, staff will use **ongoing assessment, questioning, and observation** to adjust teaching in real time, providing appropriate levels of challenge and support. This approach promotes **inclusive, responsive classrooms** where all pupils can make meaningful progress, and aligns with our commitment to **high expectations for every learner**.
- Prior to Teacher Consultation Meetings and prior to Reports being completed, the Class Teacher, the Deputy Head Academic, the Head of the Prep School, and the Prep School Head of Learning Support meet to analyse every pupil's current progress in a termly Pupil Progress Meeting. In this meeting, standardised test scores are compared to teacher assessments, classwork and homework to delve deeply into every pupil's learning profile, current outcomes and potential. How learning is effectively adapted is discussed during this meeting, as well as having been observed in lesson observations, learning walks and book looks.
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- Maintain and develop the **intelligent, purposeful use of technology** across the curriculum, ensuring digital tools are employed **strategically and only where they demonstrably enhance learning**. In partnership with SLT, teachers will continue to make informed decisions about when and how to use technology, prioritising **pedagogical value**, and ensuring that its use is **age-appropriate, subject-relevant, and inclusive**.



- In the second year of our curriculum review, we aim to **consolidate and refine the developments introduced in Year 1**, ensuring that curriculum enhancements are **embedded in classroom practice** and align with our school's values and strategic priorities. This year will focus on:
  - **Evaluating the impact** of changes on pupil outcomes and engagement;
  - **Strengthening cross-curricular links** and progression across year groups;
  - **Identifying areas for further innovation or simplification**, particularly in response to staff and pupil feedback;
  - Ensuring that curriculum planning remains **coherent, inclusive, and responsive** to the evolving needs of our learners.