



FRANCIS HOLLAND SCHOOL

SLOANE SQUARE

Name of Policy	Learning & Teaching (Senior School)
Author	SLT
Committee for Review & Approval	Education
Date of Last Revision	Spring 2020
Date of Committee Approval	Summer 2020
Date of Council Approval	Summer 2020
Date of Next School Review	Spring 2022
Date of Next Committee Review & Approval	Summer 2022
Date of Next Council Approval	Summer 2022
Regulation Number	n/a
Regulation Description	n/a

Revision History	
This section should be completed by the reviewer each time this policy is reviewed	
Changes made [brief description of edits]	Date [Term and Year]

Availability of this document:

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Learning and Teaching

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. Learning will be promoted when teachers themselves are seen to be committed to their subjects and when students perceive that teachers are learners too.

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. Learning is not the transference of information and not rote learning.

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.

Aims

For the students

- To learn effectively at the cognitive level
- To be autonomous learners – 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
- In particular, the school places emphasis upon learning that enables pupils to develop the 7 Cs: Curiosity, confidence, creativity, communication, collaboration, craftsmanship and commitment

For the school

- To have learning as a high priority, with teachers who talk about learning and keep abreast of research on the subject of learning
- To have teachers who increase the self-esteem and confidence of students by treating them as individuals and by having a positive approach
- To recognise that teaching methods must be varied and that this variety makes a difference

Procedures

Teachers talk about learning and share good practice

- Departments should discuss the specific issue of learning needs, including stretch and challenge, in their meetings at least every term. This might involve individual students as well as more general learning strategies. The Head, the Deputy Head Academic (DHA) and SLT receive minutes of all department meetings, which facilitates the effective communication and monitoring of discussions about teaching and learning.
- Some Development days are used for enhancing understanding of learning and sharing good practice for professional development.

- 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.
- Learning and teaching working parties are convened regularly by the DHA to discuss aspects of whole school practice. 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 sixth form enrichment programme 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 DHA and Director of Creative Enterprise work together with the Heads of Enrichment to ensure an engaging programme is in place across the school for pupils who are able, gifted and talented.
- The Academic Reading Group also meets half termly and provides a forum in which teaching staff can discuss aspects of pedagogy.
- Heads of Department meetings are a particularly important forum for the development of whole school practice.

Departments' focus on learning

- Departments have a section in their handbooks on Learning and Teaching. This will include reference to how they challenge students in their learning, stretch the very able, support the weak, encourage independent learning and differentiate between abilities in their teaching strategies and the work that is set.
- 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.
- Departments produce guidance to help students in their learning e.g. topic sheets to help students see where their course is going, revision sheets, a sheet explaining what marks mean, grade criteria etc.
- Whole school marking symbols have made it easier for pupils to access feedback from their teachers.
- Teachers are expected to write meaningful comments on pupils' work so that girls can improve and move towards targets, rather than simply being awarded a mark.
- 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 evaluate how successful their methods are for making students effective learners e.g. Prep, methods of assessment, individual targets.
- Heads of Department encourage their staff to review the success of individual lessons and prep set, in fulfilling the aims of the lesson and in achieving the desired outcomes and modifying schemes of work and lesson planning when required. Work schemes and lesson plans should include suggestions for stretching and challenging the most able, as extension work, optional tests etc.
- Departments use their teaching rooms for displays which enhance effective learning.
- Statistical evidence from tests, assessments, and examinations is used to inform teaching and increase effective learning. Departments will develop their own systems of whole year group tracking as supported by the sharing of exemplar work in heads of department meetings.

- Departments are encouraged to use ICT to develop learning strategies and from September 2020 the school will be moving to O365 and the use of Microsoft Teams will be implemented across the school.
- TIPS (Thinking Innovatively and Problem Solving) skills are developed throughout the school, during TIPS days in years 7 and 8, the embedding of TIPS skills (The 7 Cs referred to previously) in departmental schemes of work, opportunities in the enrichment programmes that include the upper school and sixth form taught enrichment lessons. This is a key aspect of learning, construed as preparing girls to flourish in life.

Life Skills 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 – 13. 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 DHA, Heads of Section, Heads of Year, Head of Learning Strategies and Head of Academic Mentoring work closely together to promote effective learning in the school. They also work with Heads of Department to identify the most able and to coordinate programmes designed to stretch and challenge these individuals. Initial identification of both these groups is done via MidYIS and ALIS testing and the results of continuous assessments throughout a student's school career.