

# **CITY OF LONDON SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The City of London School for Girls ("CLSG") seeks to create a culture in which learning is highly valued and well supported so that all students fulfil their potential and leave school with a love of learning. Learning is the central function of CLSG.

Teaching is distinct from learning. The role of teachers is to facilitate the learning of the students. This policy sets out how teaching is to be undertaken so as to best promote learning.

This policy also considers the role of agents other than the classroom teacher in the learning process.

### **PROMOTING LEARNING EFFECTIVELY**

A student can only be an effective learner if she is involved in the process of learning and can then apply that process to different contexts. To achieve this we strive to meet the following eight learning objectives:

1. Students learn with a sense of purpose and are interested in the subject matter
2. Students have a belief that their attainment is a function of the manner in which they approach their learning and not pre-determined by personal characteristics
3. Students recognise that they have a range of learning skills and an awareness of which ones they should employ in a given context
4. Students have a clear understanding of the success criteria when undertaking a learning activity
5. Students are informed as to how well they are performing and what they need to do to improve
6. Students learn in an environment which is purposeful, open, collaborative and respectful so that they feel safe to test their ideas, ask questions and take risks. Mistakes are viewed as an inherent part of the learning process.
7. Students have access to high quality learning resources
8. Students are set tasks which challenge all students regardless of prior learning and natural abilities

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The eight student focused objectives rely on a range of agents fulfilling their roles and responsibilities which are designated as follows:

## **1. Teachers**

- 1.1 The learning objectives students are working towards should be shared with a class.
- 1.2 The teacher should ensure that students are active learners by setting tasks which focus on the learning objectives and are both accessible and challenging to all students rather than merely presenting information to passive students.
- 1.3 Assessment by the teacher of students' learning plays a key role in the learning process. It should be used to inform the teacher when planning future lessons and tasks. It should be used by the teacher to give informative feedback to students. Feedback should help students and teachers to set targets for future learning. Success criteria should be clearly communicated. Assessment should take place during a lesson via listening and observing students' work. In Senior School, each department has its own assessment policy that is approved by the Deputy Head (Academic) and sets out the average minimum frequency a student in a given year group should receive written feedback from a teacher over the course of an academic year. Both the school wide Assessment and Recording Policy and departmental assessment policies give further guidance to the form written feedback should take. The Prep School also has its own assessment policy which covers the same areas.
- 1.4 Teachers should provide opportunities for peer and self-assessment to encourage students to be reflective and to understand better success criteria. Teachers should encourage and support students to give constructive feedback to their peers. Both homework and class-work is suitable for peer or self-assessment.
- 1.5 Dialogue between a teacher and students and between a student and other students is a powerful learning tool: it reveals hidden misunderstandings, is useful in ensuring targets set are appropriately challenging, is an essential tool for assessment and can also be used to promote higher order thinking. Teachers should consider carefully the questions they ask do not just test whether students have absorbed information. Questions in lessons should include open ended ones designed to uncover students' insights and misconceptions and to push them towards a better understanding. This also helps students to learn new ideas from each other. Teachers should also promote written dialogue when they mark work by providing opportunities for students to demonstrate they have taken on board and acted upon the targets they have been set.

- 1.6 Teachers should consider the language they use. Praise should focus on the way students have completed a task rather than just the outcome and avoid praise for innate qualities. Where possible teachers should try and appear to include themselves in the learning journey by using "we" rather than "you". Where appropriate they should consider language that promotes a culture of enquiry rather than an environment where there are only facts and falsities by using "it might be the case that" or "it could be that" rather than "it is" or "it isn't".
- 1.7 Teachers should maintain high standards of behaviour so that students feel safe and are focused on their learning. Expectations of behaviour should be made clear and the teacher should model behaviour conducive to learning. If students are not meeting the required expectations of behaviour the teacher is responsible for taking action proportionate to the offence in accordance to the Behaviour Policy. If a student is either persistently and over a series of lessons failing to meet expectations with low level poor behaviour (e.g. talking when the teacher is talking) or is guilty of a serious offence (one considered potentially harmful to another person's wellbeing or school property) they should inform the Head of Department, Form Tutor and the Head of Section.
- 1.8 Teachers should maintain records to inform themselves, parents, line managers or pastoral teams of each student's performance. This should be sufficient to track progress accurately, to inform report writing and lesson planning and to enable the teacher to set meaningful academic targets. SEN and EAL information should be included

## **2. Heads of Department**

- 2.1 The Heads of Department should monitor the learning experience of students to ensure standards are consistent and good practice is shared. In order to do this they should undertake: lesson observations of their team members' lessons, exercises in pupil voice, and scrutiny of students' work and staff marking ("book looks"). The Head of Department should use this information to work out priorities for future departmental developments. If the Head of Department uncovers instances of standards not being met they should take action to address the issue and then continue to monitor the situation to check the issue has been resolved. The Deputy Head (Academic) should be kept informed if instances of underperformance are not rectified, repeated or are considered sufficiently serious.
- 2.2 Records of monitoring activities described in 2.1 and minutes of department meetings should be kept in a monitoring file by the Head of Department.

- 2.3 If a teacher indicates that there is a student who is having problems in terms of their performance or behaviour then the Head of Department should offer support and advice and ensure that parents and pastoral teams have been informed. The Head of Department should actively try to find out from their team whether there are students who are a cause for concern. The Head of Department should inform the Deputy Head (Academic) of causes for concern via the monitoring grids.
- 2.4 The Heads of Department should support the teachers of their department by facilitating sharing of good practice and offering advice. They should help staff within the team to plan and build on existing skills, enhance performance and to provide a strategic input to CLSG's future success.
- 2.5 The Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that the curriculum on offer is well-balanced, stimulating, challenging and interesting and fulfils the requirements of public examinations. They may delegate the writing of departmental schemes of work to willing members of the department but the Head of Department maintains responsibility.
- 2.6 Heads of Department should ensure that teachers and students have access to the most appropriate resources to support learning within the constraints of CLSG's budget.

### **3. Senior Management Team (SMT)**

- 3.1 The SMT is responsible for coordinating and monitoring the different sections of the CLSG community to achieve the best possible learning outcomes.
- 3.2 The SMT should facilitate and support the development of teaching skills.
- 3.3 The SMT is responsible for whole school curriculum decisions with the aim being to well-balanced, stimulating, challenging and interesting and fulfilling the requirements of public examinations.
- 3.4 The SMT should set the agenda for the future direction of teaching and learning in terms of: the focus of staff training, priorities set for Heads of Department to monitor and annual evaluation of the learning experience of students across CLSG.
- 3.4 The SMT should set school rules and ensure they are enforced to ensure students feel safe and in the right frame of mind to learn.

### **4. Special Educational Needs (SEN) Department**

- 4.1 The SEN Department should support staff in identifying those with a special educational need.

4.2 The SEN Department should provide strategies for students and teachers to enact which will help SEN students fully access the school curriculum and learn as effectively as possible.

## **5. Library, IT, and Premises Teams and Departmental Technicians**

5.1 These agents are responsible for ensuring that the resources purchased, maintained and made available to students are focused on supporting learning outcomes, enriching the learning experience, and creating a safe and purposeful environment.

5.2 The Library and IT teams should support students and teachers to acquire the skills and knowledge to access and make use of information efficiently as possible.

5.3 The Librarian should support the development of independent learning skills and information literacy skills across the year groups by identifying specific needs and addressing them through targeted provision in PSHCE and drop in sessions.

## **6. Pastoral Teams**

6.1 The Pastoral Teams should monitor students' learning progress across the range of subjects by using school reports, exam results, pupil voice and work scrutiny.

6.2 They should communicate with parents and teachers if there is a cause for concern in a student's learning progress with a view to determining the cause and finding a solution.

6.3 They should help students monitor and evaluate their own learning and help them set targets or offer advice.

6.4 They should communicate with parents and teachers to help identify behavioural or emotional impediments to a student's learning and help find strategies to help students and teachers cope with these.

## **7. Governors**

7.1 The Governors responsibility is to hold the SMT to account in its efforts to best provide for student learning.

## **References**

1. Admissions Policy
2. Assessment and Recording Policy
3. Behaviour Management Policy
4. Curriculum Policy
5. English as an Additional Language Policy
6. Framework for Pupil Performance

7. Pastoral Care, Discipline and Exclusion Policy
8. Reporting and Feedback Procedures
9. SEND Policy
10. Supporting Students with Long Term and Serious Medical Conditions in School Policy
11. Student Mental Health Policy

**Revised:** August 2014, June 2016

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