



Learning Policy

Learning Values

At Driffield School and Sixth Form we:

- Value each other
- Value thinking and questioning
- Aim to improve our knowledge and understanding
- Aim to develop our skills
- Expect to be challenged and supported

Learning Principles

Guided by our Learning Values, at Driffield School and Sixth Form we set out to promote and embed a love of learning. We want all our students to make the best possible progress and we seek to create the conditions necessary for students and staff to embrace challenge and develop and deepen their knowledge, understanding and skills.

We recognise the importance of mindset in determining levels of motivation and realising potential. Furthermore, we believe that a whole school learning culture, founded on an active and sustained commitment to professional development, is critical to cultivating success.

Whilst there is no set formula for effective learning, we acknowledge that good pedagogy is underpinned by key components (see 'What makes great teaching' – Coe, Aloisi, Higgins, Elliot Major). These include:

- Deep subject knowledge and the ability to understand how students think and identify common misconceptions
- Quality of dialogue – including effective questioning/use of assessment, embedding skills and scaffolding new learning
- Classroom climate – promoting high expectations, positive relationships and growth mindset.
- Classroom management – making efficient use of lesson time/resources and managing student behaviour with clear rules that are consistently enforced (PBFL)
- Professional behaviours – participation in CPD, supporting colleagues and liaising/communicating with parents

We have sought to combine evidence based research, together with our knowledge of our students and staff to produce our teaching and learning 'non-negotiables'.

Non-negotiables

Get Thinking!: this is a pre-planned initial task, designed to engage students immediately on entry. The task may be, but need not be, linked to aspects of the learning to come later. Types of task or stimulus might include a focused reflection on previous learning, thinking about a local, national or global event, a lateral thinking/logic puzzle, consideration of a photograph, exploring new subject vocabulary, lyrics from a song, or an extract from a novel or poem, for example. **The essential requirement is that whatever task or stimulus is used, students are required to think.**

Bigger Picture: this is a clear explanation establishing the context of the learning. For example, how the learning fits into the scheme of learning and/or how the learning is linked

to an exam specification, and/or how the learning is linked to the wider world beyond school and sixth form such as the world of work and employability. It need not always be the teacher who establishes what the bigger picture is – the students could be asked to make the links if appropriate. **The essential requirement is that explicit contextual links are made for all beyond the immediate learning in the lesson.**

Knowledge, Understanding and Skills: this is a clear explanation of what knowledge and understanding is to be established or deepened during the learning. A clear explanation of the skills that will be taught or strengthened during the learning is also required, which might include TRICs, skills work linked to exam command words, or more generic skills. Teachers may find it useful to use Bloom's taxonomy as a reference point in distinguishing between knowledge, understanding and skill (see learning plan). On occasion, it may be that the focus is entirely skills based, in which case knowledge and understanding need not be referenced. It may also be that an explanation of the development of a skill or the deepening of knowledge shared with a group may remain the same across a sequence of lessons. **The essential requirement is that the relevant knowledge, understanding and skills used are established or refreshed for all as part of the learning.**

Learning Activity/Activities: there will be a considerable variation in terms of the types of activities offered between different teachers, different subject areas, different age groups and ability ranges and there is no preferred methodology in terms of selecting and managing activities, this is up to individual teachers working within relevant departmental guidance to best meet the needs of their students. **The essential requirements are however**

- that students are aware of a **key question or questions** with which to frame their learning
- that **all** students are **both challenged and supported**. Lower ability students need challenging and higher ability students need supporting in the same way that the converse applies. Suggestions for providing challenge and support are included as appendices.
- that all students have the opportunity to **show what they know/can do** and receive feedback ie they are **assessed** during the learning. It is up to the individual teacher working with relevant departmental guidance to select the most appropriate ways of doing so, but assessment activities might include teacher or peer verbal feedback, WWW/EBI a written response which is checked and shared, thumbs up, or 'traffic light' indicators in the planner for example. Some assessment activities may form part of the Review and Reflect aspect of the learning as below.

Review and Reflect/What next?: This is an opportunity to reflect on the learning - individually, in small groups or as a class and might include using WWW/EBI to organise thinking. **The essential requirement is that students are then made explicitly aware of what is coming next in terms of their learning.**

Homework: teachers should set homework in line with their departmental policies as appropriate, which must be written in the student planner.

The non-negotiables form the basis of the learning plan template (see appendix), which is available for teachers to use. A powerpoint version and an Ipad version are also available on the HUB. Whilst the learning plan presents a logical sequenced approach to organising learning, other than starting with Get Thinking!, teachers can re-sequence as they wish. Timings with regard to the non-negotiables are entirely at the discretion of the teacher, they may spend as little or as long as appropriate on each – **the essential requirement is that they are covered at some point.**