

Teaching and Learning Strategy: Presdales School September 2023

'Presdales School aims to provide an outstanding education that enables all students, regardless of their background and starting point, to achieve and surpass their academic potential.

We are committed to the development of independent minded young women who have active and creative minds. We expect our students to acquire a sense of understanding and compassion for one another and to have courage to act on their beliefs.

We will equip our students with the skills and attributes to empower them to lead happy and successful lives, enabling them to make a meaningful contribution to our global society.'

Aims:

The aims of this policy are:

- To communicate our expectations of teaching and learning to all staff
- To provide guidance on strategies and techniques, contributing to the CPD of staff
- To ensure consistently outstanding practice in teaching and learning across the school
- To ensure that students are engaged in active, engaging and challenging learning that will enable them to develop depth and breadth of knowledge
- To support the achievement of outstanding academic outcomes and qualifications

Effective inspirational teaching

One of the most important aspects that affects a student's learning is the day-in day-out experiences they receive in the classroom. Consistent quality-first teaching is crucial in ensuring all students make progress. To realise this, the school expects teachers to uphold the following key principles:

- Maintain outstanding knowledge and understanding of the subject that they teach and keep abreast of developments in this area
- Plan lessons which are directly linked to the department's schemes of work and the examination syllabus (if appropriate)
- Have a thorough knowledge of the needs and current attainment of each student that they teach and plan their lessons to take this into consideration
- Use effective formative assessment for learning strategies to forensically check each individual learners understanding
- Plan for differentiation in order to meet the needs of all learners (including disadvantaged, SEND and higher attaining students) so that all are supported and challenged appropriately
- Ensure that student engagement in lessons is high through the creation of a purposeful learning environment rooted in positive interactions between the teacher and their students
- Employ a range of teaching techniques to deliver well-paced lessons in which each minute of the lesson is used to ensure further progress by all students

- Involve effective questioning techniques to probe students' knowledge, proactively anticipate and diagnose any common misconceptions/errors and deal with these appropriately
- Provide mini-plenaries throughout the lesson to continually check for understanding and consolidate learning
- Promote literacy and numeracy
- Promote opportunities for students to develop their Spiritual, Social, Moral and Cultural understanding
- Ensure displays are up to date and support student's learning

Enabling 'achievement for all' in the classroom

At Presdales, we firmly believe in achievement for all, regardless of prior attainment of students or any special education needs that students may have.

We promote a list of strategies to ensure that every student can succeed and achieve. These are clearly displayed on the teachers' desks in every classroom. These are:

- **Write down key information/words/instructions** (on the WB, or a worksheet or PowerPoint/google slide)
- Give students a **list of key words** and definitions
- **Allow time** for students to process information and complete tasks (reduce the amount of tasks for some students if necessary)
- **Reduce the amount of copying down tasks:** instead offer students with SEND support a copy of the information to stick in, and tasks that will help them to understand and process the information
- Break instructions down into **small, clear steps**
- **Remove unnecessary images/busy backgrounds** from handouts/PowerPoints etc
- **Use text boxes** and **bullet points** on PowerPoints/handouts
- **Plan reading support:** read the text aloud to the class, and/or give pre-reading, and/or enable students to use a computer reader in lessons, and/or give students with significant reading difficulties a summary of the text and/or a pictorial timeline
- **Give recall practice** of key words/knowledge: every lesson
- **Intersperse verbal teaching** with short tasks/quick quizzes
- **Provide writing frames** and/or support with finding sentence starters
- If students have a pupil passport, **let them take photos of the board**

Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction

Detailed and robust research by Barak Rosenshine and other academics culminated in 17 principles of instruction. This work supports teachers in understanding how the brain acquires and uses new information, provides insight into the classroom practices that leads to the highest gains and the ways in which teachers can support students to acquire key learning strategies.

Tom Sherrington *et al* condensed the 17 original principles suggest by Rosenshine into 10 key areas. Over a series of lessons/scheme of work, teachers are expected to ensure that the following principles are implemented:

- **Daily review:** developing recall, strengthening connections of material learned and moving material from working memory to long-term memory so that it is retrieval in the future
- **New material in new steps:** present new material in small steps, only proceeding when first steps are mastered. Avoid overloading working memory as it can only process a few bits of information at once
- **Ask questions:** ask lots of questions to all students to determine if the material has been learnt
- **Provide models:** students need cognitive support to help them learn how to solve problems. Modelling, worked examples and teachers thinking aloud help to clarify the specific steps needed. This is referred to as the 'I' phase of modelling ('I' being the teacher)
- **Guided practice:** students need time to rephrase elaborate and summarise new material before moving onto independent work. This is referred to as the 'we' phase of modelling ('we' being the teacher and students)
- **Check for understanding:** formative assessment is used to forensically check that all students have a sound understanding of the material being taught
- **Obtaining a high success rate:** ensuring that the optimal success rate of 80% is achieved before moving on
- **Scaffolds for difficult tasks:** supporting students as they work through their cognitive apprenticeship. Scaffolds are temporary supports to assist in the early stages of learning, with the intention of withdrawing them as students develop confidence and understanding
- **Independent practice:** 'overlearning' to ensure new material can be recalled automatically. Significant time should be given for students to complete work independently.
- **Weekly and monthly review:** ensuring that students are required to recall previously learned material to ensure it can be retrieved from long-term memory and applied to unfamiliar scenarios. This supports students in making connections between new material and prior knowledge.

Monitoring and evaluation of Teaching and Learning

Lesson observations

At Presdales School lesson observations are used in a supportive and developmental capacity to initiate a discussion about teaching and learning and to encourage every teacher to learn from the experience. Writing a high quality feedback form and the discussion that it engenders is essential to the appraisal process. At Presdales there are two observations linked to the Appraisal, one mid-term through the Appraisal process in February and the second in the summer term. The Headteacher (or a member of SLT) also reserves the right to observe any lesson unannounced.

Appraisal observations

These observations will comprise two full lesson observations. During the first lesson observation feedback discussion, an agreed development point will have been established. This will then form part of a focus for the second lesson observation.

For all of these observations, the Lesson Feedback Form must be used and completed. When completed, a copy is given to the observer and their line manager. The Lesson Feedback Form can be found in the Appraisal folder on the Google drive.

On the Lesson Feedback Form, there is a tick list for sections on 'Achievement for all' and 'Literacy and Oracy for Learning'. It is expected that the observer will tick if they see evidence of any of these on the tick list. It is not expected that all of the things on the tick lists should be seen in every observation; however, an absence of some might prompt further discussion in the feedback conversation following the observation.

During the observation, it is expected that the observer looks in student's books and has a conversation with students about their learning and progress. The kinds of questions that might be asked are 'Is this a typical lesson?', 'What are your next steps in this subject?' or 'Do you know how to improve your work?'

Teachers are given a minimum of one week's notice of an observation taking place.

The observer arranges with the observee a convenient time for feedback to be given prior to the observation. The observer also provides a summary of strengths from the observation and key questions for discussion on the feedback form. An agreed development point is provided following the observation so that every teacher has something that they can be thinking about/working towards in the future. This then might become the focus for the next observation. The lessons are not graded.

Informal Lesson Observation

Staff may wish to observe a colleague's lesson or invite colleagues to observe their own lesson as a means to share best practice or for professional development. There is no need to complete any formal paperwork for these types of observations.

Learning Walks

In addition to the lesson observations, all teaching staff are included in up to three 15-minute learning walks. These are conducted by the Head of Department and/or the SLT link. The learning walks take place as per the calendar with one focusing on Year 11 and Year 13 exam classes in the first half of the autumn term and the second focusing on Year 9 in the second half of the spring term. The final one takes place in the second half of the summer term and focuses on Year 7. The learning walks are marked on the calendar so that everyone can see the weeks when they will happen although the exact day and time of the learning walk is not shared in advance of it taking place. The Learning Walks are seen as developmental; with areas of strength and areas for development recorded on the pro forma. Any teacher involved in the Learning Walk is given the opportunity to see any written records which have been made during the Learning Walk. This information is shared in an anonymised form with the department at a departmental meeting following the Learning Walk.

The Learning Walk Form can be found in the Learning Walk folder/Academic folder on the Google drive.

Work scrutinies

There are three work scrutinies which take place as per the calendar with one in the second half of the autumn term focusing on Year 8, one in the first half of the spring term focusing on Year 10 and one in the first half of the summer term focusing on Year 12. For each, the Head of Department interviews a small group of randomly selected students. The group contains a spread of ability as well as some SEND students and some who are disadvantaged. The students are interviewed using a pre-prepared set of questions and their responses are recorded on a Google form that is uploaded to the Google drive. A separate summary of all of the work scrutinies is presented to SLT and to the Academic committee so that best practice can be shared and areas of development addressed.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Teachers have a responsibility to reflect on their practice and to enhance and update their professional knowledge and skills. This is to ensure that consistently high expectations of teaching and learning are maintained and national teaching standards are met. Presdales CPD programme provides teachers at every stage of their career an opportunity to participate in a variety of activities in order to support the individual professional needs of staff. These CPD activities vary and may include attendance on external courses, visits from outside speakers, peer mentoring, presentations by current teachers, professional discussions, internships at other schools, meetings with other departments in different schools as well as an internal programme of CPD. The CPD programme is discussed and reviewed by SLT and staff are invited to provide feedback and suggestions for additions to the programme through regular questionnaires and surveys. A copy of the internal CPD programme can be found on the Google drive.

Updated by: Michael Payne & Sandra Inwood (June 2023)