

## ST URSULA'S CONVENT SCHOOL TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT POLICY

### VISION

Our vision at St Ursula's Convent School is to prepare every student so they may excel in the constantly changing and demanding world in which they live.

St Ursula's provides a broad and balanced curriculum that empowers all students to achieve their maximum potential and provides them with the necessary academic, spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills and understanding they will need in their future lives.

We aim for outstanding teaching and learning where teachers have 'high expectations, strong subject knowledge and match planned learning activities to the needs of different groups of students. They know how well students are doing during lessons and adapt their teaching as necessary.'

### AT ST URSULA'S, HIGH QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING INCLUDES:

- A broad based rich curriculum with excellent extracurricular provision
- An excellent bespoke teaching and learning induction and support programme for staff at all stages of their career
- A relevant staff development programme to secure the implementation of the best and newest teaching and learning techniques and strategies
- A safe and supportive learning environment for all pupils
- A system of evaluation and review to monitor pupil outcomes and teaching practice
- Pupil engagement in developing teaching and learning

### High expectations in all lessons. At St Ursula's, all:

1. lessons should be good or outstanding
2. pupils **must** make **progress**
3. lessons should be **planned** for **all** learners
4. lessons must be **challenging** and **support all** pupils
5. lessons should have a **variety of activities** which engage, enthuse and enrich the learning experience
6. lessons must have opportunities for **independent** and **collaborative** learning
7. lessons must have **assessment opportunities** which allow for and demonstrate **pupil progress**
8. **homework** should be **linked to the learning** and should be an extension of what happens in the classroom, differentiated by task where possible
9. **pupils work** should be regularly **marked** with **clear next steps for improvement**
10. **'DIT'** – Pupils should be given **designated time** to **improve the quality** of their work following feedback
11. **classrooms should be a safe, stimulating and interactive learning environment.**

### High expectations of all pupils. At St Ursula's, pupils:

1. are interested in developing a deeper understanding of the core content in your subject
2. can talk about the knowledge they have acquired

3. are effectively consolidating the skills learnt / developed and are aware of them
4. have been challenged through activities that meet their specific needs
5. are continuing to use a good standard of English and are developing in literacy skills as well as the subject
6. can effectively assess/ monitor their own progress and are determining what they need to do to improve
7. are engaged in marking dialogue and improvements are seen over time

### **Creating the Right Learning Environment**

1. For pupils to benefit fully from excellent teaching and resource provision it is vital that the school provides a safe environment not just in terms of health and safety best practice but also by providing an equal and fair chance to thrive and learn in an atmosphere of respect and dignity.
2. We are committed to ensuring zero tolerance of bullying, harassment or prejudice of any kind in line with government regulations and with our ethos as a Catholic school.
3. All pupils are encouraged to take risks in their learning and be creative. We pride ourselves that every classroom is a thriving environment for enjoyment and achievement where each person's worth is recognised and each person's contribution is valued. We encourage an environment where independence is celebrated and individuals can flourish.

### **Setting high quality, challenging homework**

Homework is anything that pupils do outside the normal school day, which contributes to their learning in response to guidance from the school. Homework encompasses a whole variety of activities instigated by teachers which supports pupils' learning.

By setting homework we hope to achieve the following:

1. develop a partnership between home and school, whereby parents/carers can learn about what is going on in school and can share learning with pupils
2. nurture and support the partnership between pupils and parents/carers, whereby learning experiences can be shared
3. provide activities which reinforce children's learning and allows them to practice skills they were introduced to in class
4. provide activities that extend children's learning and offer a challenge
5. allow children to widen their experiences and to understand the curriculum in context by applying their learning to real life
6. allow children to spend longer on activities and perhaps use other sources of information than we may not be able to provide at school
7. build children's confidence, creativity, independence and organisational skills.
8. clear understanding of homework set by teachers. Developing the use of 'Show my homework' within school, a virtual learning environment where teachers and pupils can share resources used in school and provide access to additional resources to extend pupil learning outside of the classroom

## **How do we achieve Teaching, Learning and Assessment excellence at St Ursula's?**

### **Monitoring Pupil Achievement using data**

1. Analysis of pupils' individual starting point when arriving in Year 7, using KS2 Statutory Attainment Tests (SATs), Cognitive Ability Tests (CATs) and reading and spelling tests
2. Use this data to set one of four thresholds at KS3 for each pupil which sets their long term GCSE target grades and to set aspirational target grades at KS4. This is to ensure that teaching is differentiated and pitched perfectly for each pupil and their ability which results in appropriate outcomes/results
3. Monitor pupil progress throughout the year and use this data to inform our own provision and to identify opportunities to intervene to support progress
4. Monitor how well pupils progress in each subject with special focus on English and Mathematics
5. Closely monitor the progress for different groups of pupils within the school to see how their achievements compare to other groups within St Ursula's and against groups nationally
6. Use Pupil Voice to include opinion and feedback from pupils, specifically using the Junior Assessment for Learning Board to drive standards in Teaching and learning

### **Ensuring Excellent Teaching, learning and assessment**

At St Ursula's this is achieved through:

1. Self-reflection: a key element for professional and personal development; reflecting on our experiences to gain insight into how we may have done things differently, what went well and what could have been better. It is no different in the classroom, where mature reflection on practice is an invaluable tool to ensure lessons are delivered to the highest possible standard.
2. Lesson Observations and Feedback - Led by the Senior Leadership Team and Middle Leaders. Looking for the significant things the teachers does or sets up during the observation and the impact this has on pupil learning
3. Learning walks with a key focus, to capture the very best teaching and learning on a regular basis
4. Book monitoring – analysing the quality of marking and feedback in exercise book
5. Sharing Best Practice - teachers voluntarily sharing best practice with colleagues
6. Learning from lessons – a planned schedule of observing teachers from other departments
7. CPD- Continuing Professional Development – dedicated sessions throughout year where training is delivered to all teachers to keep practice and policy up to date
8. Use of teacher profiling to identify the best practice and areas of development for each teacher across all aspects of teaching and learning

## **LEADERSHIP OF TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT**

**We are all, collectively, leaders of teaching and learning.**

### **The Classroom teacher will lead teaching and learning effectively by...**

1. Knowing every student through an effective use of data, both looking forward and looking back
2. Planning for progression using data as the foundation to create bespoke learning outcomes to drive learning forward
3. Evaluating the effectiveness of planning through marking, identifying areas which require improvement
4. Using marking not only to feedback but also to 'feedforward'; using marking which is actionable and progress driven
5. Leading learning through exceptionally secure subject knowledge with strategies that enable learning to occur through differentiation showing a thorough understanding of the students' needs.
6. Leading teaching and learning through continued experimentation and implementation of innovative pedagogy

### **The Head of Department will lead teaching and learning effectively through...**

1. Assessing the effectiveness of teaching and learning in their department
2. A strategic and visionary ability to spot patterns and see the 'big picture'
3. An analytical and evaluative ability to make connections in the data
4. Accountability in their ability to hold others to account through challenge and support
5. Inspiring and developing others in their leadership of current pedagogical advancements
6. Resilience and a zero tolerance culture

### **The Senior Leader will lead teaching and learning effectively by...**

1. Leading by example- demonstrating the qualities and knowledge that is embedded at all levels: optimistic personal behaviour, articulating clear values and moral purpose, empowering all students and staff to excel
2. Motivating expertise from within- identifying emerging talents, having an analytical understanding of how students learn, creating an ethos of development and support
3. Exercising rigorous, fair and transparent systems for support and improvement; ensuring equitable deployment of budgets and resources for sustainability; recognising the power of teams that hold each other to account
4. Creating an outward facing school in a climate of mutual challenge- to champion best practice for all students and staff

### **The Governors will lead teaching and learning effectively by...**

1. Establishing the strategic direction: setting the vision and objectives, agreeing the school improvement strategy with priorities and targets, meeting statutory duties
2. Ensuring the efficacy of Teaching and Learning by: visiting Link Departments, receiving reports from the Senior Team on the quality of Teaching and Learning, reviewing action plans where subjects have underperformed
3. Reviewing internal and external progress data e.g. Raise Online, to monitor the outcomes of students and Departments

