



**Woodbrook Vale School  
Policy Document**

**Teaching and Learning Policy**

**Date approved by Trustees: 16 November 2023**

**Review Date; Annually Autumn Term 2024**

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## Teaching and Learning Policy

Teaching and learning is the core purpose of Woodbrook Vale School. We strive to develop the whole child and enable our students to become lifelong learners. We achieve this by giving every student a variety of different learning experiences, which will enable them to reach their full potential. We believe that through careful personalisation and differentiation, as well as effective and active learning, the students will achieve.

All staff have responsibility, collectively and individually, to contribute to the delivery of our, challenging and appropriate curriculum. Teachers have a responsibility to strive to facilitate engaging and active learning experiences, where the learning needs of all individuals are met.

Students have a responsibility to actively participate in their own learning and to use strategies available to develop their knowledge and skills for life. Students should use wider reading and research as well as trips and visits where possible to help support their independent learning away from the classroom.

This policy aims to outline the characteristics of effective teaching and learning that are expected to be applied in lessons consistently at Woodbrook Vale School.

- Teaching will be high in aspiration and challenge across all abilities.
- Teachers will actively encourage students to show resilience and take opportunities to promote a growth mindset.
- Lessons will be thoroughly planned to ensure tasks are appropriate, inclusive, relevant and challenging at every level.
- Teachers will set, and share with students, at least one learning objective for individual lessons. Additional success criteria may be included where appropriate.
- Teachers will have a good knowledge of the subject they teach, fully understand subject-specific concepts and terminology and teach these explicitly.
- Teachers will be aware of the individual needs of students within their class and have information available to them about their students when planning lessons e.g. 'GO4Schools – Prior Attainment/ SEND / Disadvantaged
- Teachers will ensure that effective differentiation (e.g. through 'Quality First Teaching') is provided for students, appropriately challenging all students and all groups of students. Where relevant, teachers will plan to work with additional colleagues (e.g. LSA/HLTA/Cover Supervisors) in supporting the learning of students.
- Teachers will be expected to produce and use knowledge organisers within their lessons and for homework tasks.
- Teachers will use opportunities for low stakes testing to ensure knowledge is learned.
- Where appropriate teachers will use differentiated questioning and demonstrate understanding of the different ways students think about subject content.
- Within a series of lessons, learners will be presented with opportunities to work in a variety of ways, including individual, group and paired work. Technology will be used when appropriate and when teaching and learning is enhanced by its use.
- Students work will be marked in line with the schools marking policy including a dialogue of Next Steps and Next Steps Action applied through Directed Improvement and Reflection Time (DIRT). 'Next Steps' comments will be directly linked to learning and progress and will be easily understood by all students. Students will be given opportunities to improve their work. They will be given time to apply their knowledge and understanding in new ways that stretches their thinking.

- Teachers will actively encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning and work independently when appropriate.
- Relevant stretching homework tasks will be set in line with guidance (see Appendix 1).
- Students will be given opportunities in lessons to strengthen their skills in reading, writing and mathematics, where appropriate, across all subjects.
- Teachers will adhere to the 'Behaviour Policy' to help create a positive learning environment.

The individual lesson expectations:

- The teacher is greeting the students at the door (where possible).
- Students are working after entering the classroom and for the duration of the lesson.
- The register must be taken within the first 5 minutes of the lesson
- Lessons are resourced before the lesson.
- Communication with LSA's is done prior to the lesson or at the start of the lesson where possible.
- Lessons will usually fit into the developed Scheme of Work and in line with the subject specific Curriculum Map.
- When the teacher is addressing the whole group, students will be silent so they are able to hear what is being said.
- No student is without a task at any point during the lesson, including differentiated extension tasks.
- Low levels of disruption are dealt with quickly and in line with school policy.
- Teachers move around the class offering 'active verbal feedback' as a part of the lesson.
- Staff create a culture of students feeling confident to read aloud in lessons. encourage students to read aloud in lessons.
- Teachers take into account individual student needs when delivering lessons.

Retrieval and Retention	Provide a start to a lesson that reviews prior learning and consolidates knowledge. This maybe low stakes testing or other spaced retrieval activities.
Purpose and Sequencing	Explain the purpose of the lesson and how it fits into the bigger picture and wider scheme of work. Ensure all students are explicitly aware of the aims of the lesson. All students should be aiming for the same objective but the support maybe different.
High Expectations and Communication	Ensure we ‘teach to the top’ with high ambitious expectations and scaffolding provided. Ensure instructions are concise, communication is clear and the language we use is always positive and encouraging. When communicating we are using key principles of Cognitive Load Theory.
Knowledge and Deliberate Practice	Ensure we are explicit about the core knowledge we are teaching our students and how this will be built upon lesson by lesson. Ensure this is communicated to students during the lessons and links throughout the course are explored. Using Knowledge Organisers will support this. Ensure we are offering and allowing students opportunities to practice subject-specific skills.
Use of Additional Adults	LSA’s add value to the work of the teacher, not replace them – the expectation is that the needs of all students are addressed, primarily, through high quality classroom teaching. Additional adults in the classroom should help develop students’ independent learning skills and support them in managing their own learning. Give the least amount of help first. Allow sufficient wait time, so students can respond to the question or attempt the stage of a task independently. LSA’s should intervene appropriately when students demonstrate that they are unable to proceed. Effective communication between teacher and additional adult is key.
Modelling and Questioning	Ensure mew material is presented in small steps and we are explicitly modelling and showing students what ‘success’ looks like. Ensure probing questioning is used to aid critical thinking, address misconceptions and is driven by a continuous desire for whole class understanding.
Literacy and Reading	Ensure there is a focus on improving and developing vocabulary and literacy. Use challenging texts and a variety of different reading strategies (skimming, scanning, close). Encourage reading aloud in class as a part of day-to-day lessons.
Metacognition and Self-Regulation	Ensure we are explicit in communicating and teaching effective learning strategies that students can adopt themselves at home. Ensure we are active in explaining ‘thinking’ to students. Ensure that, when ready, scaffolding is gradually removed to allow students independence. Ensure lessons are inclusive and accessible for all.
Feedback and Review	Ensure feedback is clear, manageable, specific and targeted. Ensure formative assessment is acted upon and that we are constantly aiming to gain as much feedback as possible from students during the lesson.

**Homework**

At Woodbrook Vale School, the fundamental reason for homework is to give an opportunity for the independent application of skills taught in the classroom. Only when asked to work on something without support, will a student be sure they have achieved proficiency. This in turn will facilitate their growing confidence. Homework scaffolds students towards becoming fully independent and motivated in their learning. It is expected that students will read independently, develop a range of strategies for memorisation and understand the fundamental need to commit key facts and information to their long-term memory in order to free up the processing power of their brain. Homework is a fundamental part of this process and students will be taught that there is always something useful that can be done in an empty moment to move their learning forward. They should not have to rely on a formal homework set by a teacher, to steal a leaning moment. However, homework will be set regularly in order to support the emergence of good habits for independent learning.

Homework is valuable because it:

- encourages students' self-confidence;
- helps them to identify which of the skills, they can apply independently
- gives retrieval practice for new knowledge (e.g. From Knowledge Organiser)
- consolidates and reinforces knowledge and understanding developed in school;
- develops planning and problem-solving skills;
- provides opportunities to develop independent research skills;
- necessitates the development of memorisation techniques as information from a topic is moved into long term memory
- involves parents, carers and others in their child's schoolwork.

The amount of homework set may vary week by week depending on circumstances. Some students are capable of doing more, others might do less – principles of differentiation should apply.

The quality of the homework being set and the homework being produced is of more importance than the quantity of homework produced.

All homework set must be recorded on Google Classroom which can be visible to parents if they request access Please be mindful of students who do not have internet access to ensure they are not disadvantaged in completing the work. There will be a homework club available for students to attend.

The setting of homework will be monitored by the Head of Faculty and the SLT link to ensure the quality and consistency of the homework being set.

The purpose of homework should be made explicit to learners, e.g. to increase a specific area of knowledge, or fluency in a particular area.

It should not be used as a punishment or penalty for poor performance.

A variety of tasks with different levels of challenge is likely to be beneficial to the learner.

Homework tasks vary. They might involve learning/revising for a test via specific tasks such as memorising key aspects on a Knowledge Organiser, reading independently (checked via 'Accelerated Reader' quizzing), doing some research around a topic to deepen understanding solving a problem or completing a past paper under self-imposed test conditions. Homework should always extend, and enhance students' learning. A large proportion of homework assignments are carefully planned as part of the schemes of work of different subjects. They serve to inform the teacher about how secure student learning is and whether gaps are emerging in knowledge or skills. Homework should be appropriate for the students for which it is set and will sometimes be adjusted to address gaps.

As well as completing specific "set" homework, successful students spend time and effort at home becoming independent and curious learners. For our knowledge-rich curriculum, much time, effort and strategy is required to embed that knowledge and make it freely available for processing. Furthermore, all students ought to read fiction based texts at home; some should regularly read aloud to develop both confidence and expression; all should learn spellings, particularly of academic vocabulary including Spanish and French; and all need practice with mental mathematics and memorising formulae.

If homework is not set for any reason then the student should work independently at home using Knowledge Organisers, revision guides, class notes, or software such as Keerboodle, Oak Academy, BBC Bitesize or Tassomai.

### **Frequency and duration**

**KS4** students get a minimum of one piece of homework per GCSE course per week. There is no homework timetable for this as we expect the students to work with their teacher and tutor in managing their time effectively to ensure all homework is completed. This will be monitored through GO4Schools.

**KS3** Students should get a minimum of one piece of homework per subject per two weeks for English, Maths, Science, Humanities and MFL. Art and Design, Music, PE, Drama, PD and Computing will give homework when appropriate. The guided duration a student should spend on a piece of homework is:

**Year 7** – 15-30min + reading fiction

**Year 8** – 20-30min + reading fiction

**Year 9** – 30-45min + reading and/or revision

**Year 10** – 30-45min + revision

**Year 11** – 45-60min + revision

Guidelines on the expected duration of the homework should be indicated in Google Classroom when the homework is set.

Homework will be usually set with a deadline of one week. Shorter pieces of homework may be given less time to complete, however, teachers should not expect work to be done by the next day. This allows students the opportunity to manage their time effectively with extracurricular activities and, with support of parents/ carers and form tutors, students will complete all homework set. Teachers have a high expectation that all students will complete their homework on time and to an acceptable standard. Arrangements will be made, when particular students fail to complete homework regularly, or homework is not of an acceptable standard, for them to remain in school to do the extra work.

## **Monitoring**

The monitoring of individual students is the responsibility of the teachers concerned. Persistent problems will be referred to the Head of Faculty. It is very important that homework arrangements, including sanctions for not completing it, are consistently applied throughout the school so that all students see the arrangements as fair. Head of Faculty should monitor the setting and the completion of homework. The quality of homework being set will be included in SLT line management meetings.

Parents should be encouraged to be involved in their child's education, to check with their child if they have homework and support their child with managing their time. The parent can support the school in encouraging independence and students taking responsibility for their own learning. Parents should do what they can to provide a peaceful place in which students can do their homework, to make it clear to them that they value homework and support their child in explaining how it can help them to make progress in school. If a parent feels they need to support their child further, then they can request to have access to their child's google classroom and will get notifications when homework is set.

## **Homework support**

Students who wish to complete homework after school can use room 8 to do this. Staff will be available to support students with homework. The support is only for doing homework and additional school work. The session will run from 3pm-4pm.

## **SEND/High Needs Students**

Some students with specific SEND will need adjustments to be made. Staff are encouraged to discuss individual student strategies with the SEND department and be flexible to the needs of students. Room 16 is available at lunchtimes for SEND students to receive homework support. Flexibility over homework can be considered as a reasonable adjustment for students with an Educational, Health and Care Plan.

## **Failure to complete Homework**

Professional discretion should be used by teachers regarding students who fail to complete homework or complete homework to an unsatisfactory quality.

Students who fail to complete homework to an acceptable standard and hand it in on time will be given an opportunity to complete it at lunchtime

If they fail to attend this additional session, they will be expected to stay behind for a minimum of 30 minutes as a stage 4 detention.