



Caludon Castle

Learning & Teaching Policy

Local Level Policy

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Date	Notes	

LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY STATEMENT

Vision for 2023-20234: *Teaching to the Top – know more, understand more, remember more*

“Those who know, do. Those who understand, teach.” Aristotle

Our vision is that we all feel empowered to plan for, deliver and identify great learning and teaching experiences. By doing this, we will raise the achievement and self-esteem of our learners.

This will be achieved in a supportive, co-operative environment in a number of ways: developmental lesson observations and learning walks, with strengths and ‘even better ifs’ identified, both for individual staff and across faculties; work scrutinies with and without student voice; lesson planning, and the sharing and modelling of good practice. All of the QA points will be recorded on the Teacher Development Profile, as a developmental working document. We will continue to focus this year on coaching and how students learn to enhance teacher pedagogy.

This year, we are continuing to place an emphasis on **‘teaching to the top’**: the best approach to differentiation is to teach to the top, and to scaffold the others to get there. **Teaching to the top** is also about changing the attitudes and mind-set of teachers and students. Teachers need to have the belief that students can tackle difficult challenges, cope with demanding independent study and be expected to deliver excellent work consistently. If this belief is not engrained in both students and teachers, expectations will not be fulfilled and success will not be achieved. This will be embodied through the implementation of the ‘Thinking Hard’ agenda. We aim to develop staff pedagogy and develop our students so that they **know more, understand more and remember more**.

We will also further our creative learning ambition this year through the wider integration of 1:1 devices, this scheme will now be able to Years 7,8,9 and 12. Faculties will be tasked with integrating technology to enhance and transform learning, while building student resilience and creative, collaborative learning experiences.

We strive to ensure that **the curriculum** is as challenging as possible. Teachers will set challenging tasks; be encouraged to use challenging texts; eliminate any simple, easy, gentle, time-wasting tasks, which do not challenge high attainers. Work should be done with rigour, accuracy and depth from September. Ideally, a classroom culture should be established where intellectual activity is celebrated, where questioning is deep and probing, and where work habits become embedded.

High attainers should be identified, with the learning planned for them, ensuring that they are always challenged. If they are continually stretched and enjoy the learning experience, everyone gains. The **TIF (Take it Further) agenda** continues to flourish in classrooms, with the concept of **‘Thinking Hard’** being introduced from September.

Our **Curriculum maps and curriculum overviews** are in place and are working documents. They are hyperlinked to key assessment and home learning points, and they demonstrate challenge for all.

Our CPD and key foci:

Six Principles of Great Teaching

Students can only succeed when they have had clarity of explanation, effective modelling and the opportunity to practise what they have learned.

The best teachers support students by teaching new material in manageable amounts, explaining clearly, modelling, guiding student practice, helping students when they make errors and providing sufficient practice and review. We continue to focus on our **Six Principles of Great Teaching**.

- **Explanation** underpins great teaching and is key to ensure student understanding. It should be used effectively as a hook to stimulate curiosity, to correct misconceptions and to build knowledge, skills and understanding.
- **Modelling** is essential in ensuring that students know how to apply the knowledge, skills and understanding which they have been taught. Great teachers ensure that they model writing, thinking and subject-specific language, so that students know what is possible.

- **Practice:** no learning is acquired unless knowledge, skills and understanding are consolidated and practised. This is the element which is sometimes forgotten. Practice needs to be regular in order not only to encourage retention but also to promote independence.
- **Questioning:** expert questioning by teachers can assess quickly where gaps in knowledge and understanding may be. They will expertly check for understanding using hinge questions, provoke deeper thinking by asking questions that make students think hard and increase the ratio of participation and thinking in the classes they teach.
- **Challenge:** the 'teach to the top' agenda is provided by planning for and teaching challenging material. Responsive teaching will ensure that appropriate scaffolding is provided so that all students can access larger concepts. Challenge does not mean making learning harder, but the easiest path to the most challenging material.
- **Feedback:** the importance of feedback in closing and learning gaps can never be underestimated. Feedback can be written, whole class, audio or verbal, given at appropriate points and students are able to understand what they have done well and are encouraged to action their targets which are specific, focused and helpful with the aim of moving their learning forward.

Our Six Principles and CODE are structured in a table, with each focus broken down into key areas, so that the table can become a checklist for great learning and teaching. As this table identifies each of our learning foci, it should be used by teachers as a self-reflective tool to improve their practice.

We signpost this to the students in a symbol form: *I do* , *we do* , *you do* . This will, also, provide a shared language for students and teachers.

CODE -The Four Principles of Great Learning

The quality of teaching is a key strength at Caludon. For 2023-2024, we will be building on this success by continuing to work on CODE in conjunction with the 6Ps. This is key if we are to understand what great learning looks like in practice.

These principles are as follows:

- ✚ Students self-assess and reflect on their learning and understanding (**Challenge**)
- ✚ Students understand what they are learning and why they are learning it (**Ownership**)
- ✚ Students use literacy and language rigorously, fluently and precisely to communicate effectively (**Dialogue**)
- ✚ Students are engaged in essential learning activities to build, extend, apply and remember their knowledge, skills and understanding (**Engagement**)

These principles will be used alongside the Six Principles of Great Teaching in our TDPs and all faculties will explore in depth what good learning looks like in their areas.

Students will also have **CODE for Learning** sessions in years 7-9 to enable to know what a good learner looks like and how to apply these strategies in the classroom to become a better learner.

Learning and Teaching CPD

There will be 7.5 hours of specific Learning and Teaching focussed CPD. There will be a 90 minute led session at the start of each term, followed by an hour's self-directed choice in each half term two.

These sessions will focus on our **specific L and T priorities** for this academic year.

- ✚ **Assessment of/for learning**
- ✚ **Checking for understanding**
- ✚ **Behaviours for Learning**
- ✚ **Challenge**

"A great teacher can teach Calculus with a paper clip and literature in an empty field. Technology is just another tool, not a destination."

We will be offering a series of L and T workshops, based around the Ten Principles and Creative Learning, underpinned by research, which will enhance teachers' pedagogy and practice. This is further enhanced by memberships to the National College, which offers a wealth of bespoke webinars and other materials.

There will also be cross-Trust leadership training for aspiring, middle and senior leaders. Teaching Staff and Year Leaders have the opportunity to apply for NPQ programmes and are supported by an in-school coach.

Faculty-centred leadership will continue this year, with faculties setting the agenda for which CPD they want and when they want it. They will be able to elicit advice from our learning and teaching 'experts' (Leaders of Learning), to help them with their bespoke CPD.

Learning and Teaching Structure

Our Steering Group will set the strategy for our learning and teaching landscape this year.

Our **Principal and Assistant Leaders of Learning** will continue to have a team to lead on one each of the Principles. They are excellent role models, having all been accredited as Lead Learning Practitioners. They are able to coach and/or mentor staff to improve their professional practice, and some of them are responsible for doing this across the school. They will continue to be instrumental in leading staff CPD on the Six Principles of Great Teaching, the Four Principles of Great Learning and on the Blended Learning agenda and in developing relevant resources.

We invest in accrediting key teachers as **Lead Learning Practitioners** as well as faculties. We continue to train our **Student Leaders of Learning**, so that they become empowered to make a real contribution to the development of our learning journey. Colleagues are able to access the Dynamic Teacher Programme which focuses on developing consistently good practitioners.




Ofsted

We are proud of our last Ofsted report, *"...teaching and learning are strong. There is effective use of the school's teaching and learning strategies, such as 'teaching to the top' and 'taking it further', which have led to improved progress in nearly all subjects since September 2018."*

Two of our Six Principles featured strongly in the Ofsted report – questioning and feedback: *"Teaching is effective. There is a purposeful and productive atmosphere in almost all lessons. Teachers create and sustain constructive and trusting relationships with pupils. Pupils are happy to contribute to lessons and they ask and answer questions articulately."*

Challenge Partners

Our latest Challenge Partners report (March 22) states the following strengths:

-  The investment in high- quality continuing professional development (CPD), motivates staff to improve their subject pedagogical practice. The six teacher principles and the four learning profiles form the bedrock of the school's classroom culture.
-  Teachers' credibility is high amongst students, with teachers being seen as experts in their subjects. They are precise in their modelling of concepts and, in discussions, offering glimpses of where the learning is going. This may take the form of a piece of writing, an explanation to a mathematical problem or a solution to a design challenge.
-  Teachers' questioning of students is well developed, both to ensure the promotion of learning and to address students' particular needs. Students value the opportunity to participate in debate in lessons.

Our priorities this year are to embed and capitalise on our vision, successes and innovations, whilst securing great teaching and learning for all.

