

Teaching and Learning Framework

Introduction

At Leicester Grammar School we recognise that every learner is a unique individual, with a specific range of interests and aptitudes. In addition, their parents will have different priorities and ambitions for their child's education. These learners and their parents are served by a group of passionate and highly skilled teachers in a variety of subjects, each of which requires learners to display different knowledge and skills.

With all this complexity it is quite clear that a single approach to teaching and learning would be difficult to define and unlikely to bring success for learners or teachers. Nonetheless, we can find common strands of excellence in both teaching and learning. We believe every LGS learner should aspire to curiosity, responsibility and resilience: attributes which feature prominently in our school values and which we believe are key to pupil development. This document highlights the role that teachers, parents and pupils have in working together to nurture these attributes.

This document focuses on the teaching and learning that occur in and around academic subjects, but as a school we recognise the pivotal role of co-curricular activities in developing each learner's curiosity, responsibility and resilience. We believe it is essential that every learner benefits from work other than academic study, whether this is volunteering, part-time work, academic extension or some of the other co-curricular activities on offer at LGS. These activities help develop our pupils and make them more rounded individuals. Experience tells us that the most successful academic pupils are busy in a range of areas, not just with their books.

The three attributes of an excellent LGS learner

1. Curiosity

We inspire our learners to be creative and imaginative and to revel in the glory of learning for its own sake. We help our learners to understand that exams are just part of the learning process, not its sole focus. We stimulate our learners with rich questions and help them to explore beyond the limits of the curriculum.

2. Responsibility

We set high expectations and clear boundaries for our learners, so that they can develop responsibility for their own learning. We teach them research skills and give them opportunities to work collaboratively with others, both pupils and teachers. Our aim is that they have developed into independent learners by the time they leave us.

3. Resilience

We help our learners to think about how they learn. We teach them to reflect on their learning and to be self-aware. We encourage them to be brave about trying new approaches and working in different ways. By doing this we equip them with the resources, so that they can cope with failure and recognise it as an essential part of learning.

Attribute 1 – Curiosity

What can teachers do?

- Employ stimulating questioning techniques, asking open and rich questions
- Recognise and praise pupils when they display academic curiosity
- Build an inclusive classroom environment where all pupils feel confident about contributing
- Start lessons with activities that help pupils to transition into the lesson
- Use a variety of activities to stimulate learners in different ways, including learning games and competitions where appropriate
- Make links between topics and subjects when teaching
- Provide time and resources for independent learning (open ended tasks and homework, reading lists, podcasts, TED talks, websites, Olympiads, external competitions...)
- Relate appropriate lessons to current events and future careers, making use of OLs or making links with other schools in the UK and beyond, industry, universities etc
- Model the use of research in lessons and teach learners how to undertake their own research so that they can answer their own questions
- Teach beyond the curriculum when the opportunity arises
- Ensure that classrooms are attractive and stimulating places to learn

What can learners do?

- Undertake their own research, from a very basic level (watching a YouTube video or reading a blog) through to more formal research
- Ask questions in class
- Talk to teachers about their interests and ask for guidance about how to explore these
- Take ownership of ideas learned in school and undertake independent reading, explore recommended websites and enter external competitions
- Participate in co-curricular and super-curricular activities to deepen their knowledge and stimulate new interests

What can parents do?

- Take an interest in their children's work at school, discussing topics of interest and encouraging their child to read around these
- Stimulate their child by visiting the theatre, galleries and museums
- Model the actions of a curious person by actively exploring their children's questions
- Ask their children about what they have learnt, not what mark they scored
- Encourage their children to use the skills learned at school (e.g. to perform real calculations at home, to give an opinion on a book or TV show, to use a foreign language on holiday)

Attribute 2 – Responsibility

What can teachers do?

- Give time for pupils to reflect on marked work and tests, ensuring that pupils take action if needed (e.g. making corrections or practising spellings)
- Encourage pupils to set specific targets after tests to guide future learning
- Share marking policies, revision checklists and mark schemes to pupils where appropriate
- Explicitly teach exam technique, including interpreting command words and how to use exam board mark schemes
- Recognise that revision approaches will vary by subject and explicitly teach revision techniques in class
- Mark work using teacher feedback but without grades where this is appropriate
- Encourage pair work and “flipped learning” approach where the topic material and pupil maturity make this appropriate
- Stick to the homework timetable and allocated times
- Have high expectations of learners, encouraging them to use help clinics when needed
- Have high expectations around homework completion and timeliness

What can learners do?

- Be organised around homework: keeping their planner up-to-date and attempting work on the night set so they can approach teachers to ask for help... before the deadline!
- Undertake homework independently, in a quiet place, with phone and other devices switched off and out of sight
- Carefully read teachers' comments on marked work and in reports, think about how they can use these to improve, and ask their teachers if they are unsure
- Look back at previous work and remind themselves of what they found difficult
- Be familiar with subject specifications and syllabuses when relevant
- Catch up with work missed if absent, including both notes and homework
- Throw themselves into activities in lessons, and commit a proper amount of time to homework outside of lessons
- Recognise when they need extra help and seek help when needed (for example, at a subject help club)
- Ensure they get sufficient sleep, especially on school nights, to allow their brain to rest and recuperate before the next day's learning

What can parents do?

- Help children to establish a sustainable routine at home, with a designated time for homework and time to relax, provide a quiet work space without distractions, good routines for children packing bags for the next school day, and regular sleep patterns

- Support their child and the school when pupils get it wrong. Making a mistake and learning to deal with the consequences of this is an important part of developing responsibility.
- Encourage pupils to make good use of the academic support available at school, both within and beyond lessons.

Attribute 3 – Resilience

What can teachers do?

- Use the learning from cognitive load theory to structure pupils' thinking:
 - Clearly explain the structure of topics, differentiating between facts to be learned/memorised, skills to be developed and understanding to be displayed
 - Model problem solving approaches, including worked examples, and use scaffolds to help learners navigate new material
 - Use spoof and peer marking to help pupils identify and understand common errors
 - Use video footage to help pupils reflect on their performance physical subjects
- Help pupils to think about how they learn:
 - Use traffic light cards (or equivalent) to encourage pupils to gauge their own progress and to identify areas where they need more help
 - Use questionnaires, topic review surveys and exit cards to encourage pupils to think about how they learn best
- Growth mindset:
 - Encourage learners to take appropriate risks when attempting challenging tasks
 - Use a variety of activities to help all learners find success
 - Pick pupils to answer questions, regardless of whether they have their hand up!
 - Encourage pupils to make use of their own resources before asking the teacher
 - Support pupils when they "fail" (e.g. get a poor test score): this is the best time to teach growth mindset ("if you memorise xxx you'll get 10 more marks next time")
- Testing:
 - Explain the purpose of tests: it is the process of preparing for a test, taking it, and learning from the outcomes that matters, much more than the score
 - Set regular, low-stakes, tests to help pupils learn and so that they understand their progress and where they need to focus extra effort
 - Allow time for pupils to reflect on tests and homework, and help them to do this, so that they understand their own learning and where gaps may remain
 - Explicitly teach a structured approach to revision and relate this to question types in test and exam questions

What can learners do?

- Set themselves specific targets for improvement, that focus on the process of learning not the outcome (e.g. "attempt my homework on the night it is set" or "sit away from people who distract me" rather than "get at least 90%")
- Focus on teachers' comments, rather than their mark
- Write targets after tests to help themselves improve next time
- Use their own resources, including textbook and notes, to help themselves when stuck

What can parents do?

- Help their children to work through "failure" and remind them that this is part of any worthwhile learning experience
- Encourage their children to have a growth mindset: success is possible when we work hard and accept guidance, it's not about being naturally good at some things and bad at others
- Focus on effort grades, rather than attainment grades, when reports come in
- Ask their children about the process of learning, not the mark they scored

Implementation

For this framework to have a positive impact on Teaching and Learning at LGS it needs to be communicated and implemented effectively. We will select one theme to focus on each term. Examples of possible themes are: stimulating question techniques, undertaking independent research, preparation for exams, the implications of cognitive load theory, feedback and reflection, and peer marking. The Teaching and Learning Steering group will be involved in developing and discussing the themes, and in their means of promotion.

The chosen theme will be communicated to teachers, pupils and parents:

- With teachers:
 - The theme of the term will be discussed and promoted at INSET
 - Themes will be actively discussed at department meetings
 - Themes will be included within department development plans
 - Themes may be selected as a focus for lesson observation
 - Themes will be discussed within teacher development reviews
- With pupils:
 - The theme will be discussed at assembly and within form time
 - Teachers will promote the theme in lessons
- With parents:
 - The theme of the term will be promoted to parents via the Headmaster's blog
 - Where appropriate, we will run parent information evenings to allow deeper discussion, or produce parent guides to help inform parents

More generally, this framework will be promoted via the school's website, in tandem with a pupil-friendly summary.

We will monitor the impact of this framework, and the consequent actions, via SLT work scrutiny, SLT lesson drop-ins, line manager lesson observations, teacher development review and department development reviews.