

KELSO HIGH SCHOOL
DRAFT TEACHING & LEARNING POLICY
NOVEMBER 2000

AIMS

In the classroom:

- Make teaching & learning an enjoyable experience
- Build on natural curiosity and enthusiasm for learning
- Promote high self-esteem and a sense of responsibility
- Involve and stimulate pupils through active learning
- Set achievable and high expectations for all pupils and provide appropriate support
- Develop partnerships between pupils/teachers, pupils/pupils
- Provide pupils with an appropriate curriculum which meets their needs and develops their abilities
- Create a climate of praise and positive reinforcement

In the whole school:

(Some of the above aims will also apply to the whole school context)

- Evaluate the reasons for pupil success and analyse and share the teaching process, the support processes or management structures enabling this to happen
- Evaluate the reasons for pupil failure and take action where the teaching process, the support processes or management structures cause pupils to experience failure
- Develop partnerships between teachers/teachers, teachers/parents, pupils/parents, and schools and their local communities
- Develop professional skills of teachers through mutual support and staff development working with colleagues within and beyond the school
- Promote opportunities for reflective thinking by teachers
- Develop teachers' understanding of each subjects' place in the curriculum and the demands placed upon pupils by them
- Encourage and support continuous and collaborative evaluation of the teaching process
- Develop school and classroom environments which are attractive, friendly and stimulate learning
- Make available information and communication technologies to all teachers and pupils for regular and appropriate use
- Include the wider community (including parents) in the curriculum of the school

- Promote the role of support services such as Guidance, Support for Learning Group, LSS, Departmental and School Management and Ancillary Support to enhance the teaching and learning environment of the school in all the above ways.

Rationale

The principal function of the school is to promote a positive attitude to learning. It is the view of staff and pupils in this school that this can best be effected by developing an ethos of achievement. For the development of such an ethos, certain prerequisites are essential and both staff and pupils have a responsibility to:-

- ❖ listen;
- ❖ respect different individuals' opinions/needs/abilities;
- ❖ challenge prejudiced attitudes to achievement;
- ❖ have high expectation of themselves and others;
- ❖ and persevere with work and face difficulties positively.

The needs of pupils, teachers and parents have to be considered in developing an effective teaching and learning policy. The needs of teachers, pupils and parents in relation to teaching & learning are listed in Appendix 1. In Kelso High School, we will endeavour to meet the needs of pupils, parents and teachers.

A number of particular classroom practices will have a positive effect on pupils' learning and in their behaviour. These classroom practices can be grouped under the following headings:-

- Support for Learning,
- Planning for Learning,
- Managing Behaviour,
- Wider Implications.

The sub-headings for each of these classroom practices are listed in Appendix 2.

Staff at Kelso High School will endeavour to promote effective teaching and learning by following the aims of this policy and by putting into practice the classroom practices listed in Appendix 2.

The Teaching and Learning Group will keep abreast of recent developments in Teaching & Learning and raise awareness of these within Kelso High School.

APPENDIX 1

NEEDS OF PUPILS, TEACHERS AND PARENTS

Needs of Pupils

- To work with a friendly, approachable, knowledgeable adult
- Knowledge of what they are supposed to be learning
- Discussions and explanations focused on the activity, problem or task in which they are engaged
- Identification of why they have problems in understanding or achieving something
- Reassurance that their knowledge and skills are developing steadily – to be shown they are being successful
- To receive respect and to be part of a caring community
- To receive appropriate support and guidance in course choice and in learning itself
- To work in an atmosphere where to be wrong is not seen as failure

Teachers' experience and educational research shows that quality in learning occurs when pupils experience well-structured courses.

In **preparation** for learning, pupils need:-

- to know what is to be learned and to be motivated by it
- to have connections made with what they already know, have done and are about to do
- to know the stages, orders and processes of the learning
- to have support in the acquisition of prerequisite knowledge and skills

In **developing** their learning, pupils need:-

- to have support in the development of component skills
- to have their preferred learning styles catered for in the learning process
- to have comprehensive explanations of key ideas
- to have misunderstandings and misconceptions identified and rectified
- to have a variety of work set at appropriate levels and to see its relevance
- to be given regular homework and to have it marked and returned promptly
- to be set demanding but realistic short-term targets
- to be given support in self-pacing and be taught how to persevere
- to be given models or examples to help them understand and develop their own learning

In **consolidating** their learning, pupils need:-

- to be given strategies for taking notes, highlighting key points, revising and tackling examination questions (internal and external) – developing independent learning
- to have access to appropriate learning resources at school and at home
- time to digest and reflect upon what is being taught
- time to practice, reiterate and revise learning
- time to think, do, demonstrate and talk to others about tasks within the context of their course and all their learning
- time for individual, class and group feedback.

Needs of Teachers

The need to:-

- to be shown respect
- have their workload concerns taken seriously and controlled
- be able to co-operate and work collaboratively
- work with appropriate class sizes
- have a clear understanding of the factors which influence teaching and learning
- examine current practice and develop teaching
- have support and time for reflection in a non-threatening atmosphere
- be consulted and involved in developments
- pay attention to and support whole school needs and policies

- be well informed of developments in their subjects
- be supported by effective service from guidance, learning support, senior management and administrative staff
- have effective management of discipline, curriculum, subject choices, timetable, whole school administrative procedures, accommodation, resources and reporting.

Teachers need to meet pupils' needs by:-

- being informed and take account of external factors which can affect their pupils' learning
- creating a good working atmosphere for all in the classroom
- setting high and achievable expectations for all pupils
- taking account of individual needs and previous learning
- planning work so that each pupil has the best opportunity to progress
- giving pupils responsibility and help them to develop their sense of responsibility
- seeking and valuing pupils opinions
- being fair and consistent
- having enthusiasm, patience, tolerance, understanding, empathy, sympathy
- having skills of planning, organising, communication.

Needs of Parents

Parents need to be actively involved in the process of supporting their children's learning through being:-

- made to feel welcome in the school
- given the opportunities to initiate discussion on and contribute to their children's progress
- respected and having their concerns listened to and acted upon
- given advice about how and when to support their child
- well-informed about their children's progress, their needs and how they are being met
- informed about homework which is clear and has a specific purpose
- given a timetable of important dates (for folios and investigations, etc.)
- informed of dates for tests and exams
- given clear outlines of course demands
- informed and consulted about educational developments and asked for their opinions.

APPENDIX 2
CLASSROOM PRACTICES
MANAGING LEARNING & TEACHING

Support for Learning

- Use Learning Support productively and in a variety of ways
- Vary your teaching styles – for different topics and at different times
- Make use of team-teaching (including senior pupils)
- Always give clear instructions
- Build opportunities for reinforcement and consolidation into units of work
- Build in opportunities for one-to-one communication
- Set achievable short-term target and make clear the criteria for success
- Make clear to pupils how they can improve
- Acknowledge and reward achievement
- Teach the technical vocabulary of the subject
- Keep individual pupil profiles for pupil/teacher reference
- Negotiate homework, particularly at times when revision is needed
- Give prompt positive feedback to homework.

Planning for Learning

- Be prepared for each class
- Be flexible in organisation of the classroom
- Be flexible in organisation of groups
- Make clear to pupils the outline of the course, the unit content and the homework to be undertaken.
- Produce teaching materials which meet all pupils' needs
- Take account of prior knowledge
- Make possibilities for the participation of all members of the class
- Use resources in such a way that pupils are helped in their own organisation
- Match homework and assessment to learning outcomes of syllabus
- Give plenty of warning of assessments
- Evaluate teaching and course content regularly.

Considering Individual Learning Needs

- Give as many explanations as are necessary
- Take account of pupils' interests
- Allow pupils to learn in a variety of ways
- Involve pupils in their own learning
- Offer opportunities where pupils can be open about problems

Managing Behaviour

- Set clear ground rules for behaviour in class
- Consult on these rules with pupils
- Establish a clear system of rewards and sanctions
- Give praise for improvements and for achievement
- Be consistent
- Do not punish whole classes
- Always deal with disruptive pupils

Wider Implications

- Recognise all types of achievement
- Involve parents in ensuring improvement and achievement is acknowledged
- Keep parents and pupils fully informed about the curriculum
- Give pupils maximum possible subject choice
- Ensure equality of provision for all
- Give equal status to all subjects
- Take learning and teaching principles into account when timetabling
- Take account of staff development needs regarding learning and teaching.