



## Queen Elizabeth Grammar School

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**VALIDITY – Policies should be accessed via FireFly to ensure the current version is used.**

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# **QEGS Teaching and Learning Policy**

## **1. Introduction**

This is a statement of the aims, principals and strategies for teaching and learning at QEGS.

It lays the foundations for the whole curriculum, both formal and informal and forms the context in which all other policy statements should be read.

## **2. Teaching and Learning**

This is the main purpose of QEGS.

It is the vehicle through which we offer a broad and balanced curriculum that is tailored specifically to the needs and desires of boys. We believe in lifelong learning. We want learning to be a rewarding experience for everyone and recognise that the best teaching and learning experiences can help children to lead happy and fulfilling lives. Our school motto of 'Turpe Nescire' encapsulates the love of learning we aim to foster and our school values of 'care, contribute and aspire' are reflected in our curriculum.

## **3. Aims and Objectives**

Our aims for teaching and learning are that the pupils will;

- Be tolerant and understanding with respect for the rights, views and possessions of others. Care
- Develop a responsible attitude towards work and their role in society. Contribute
- Develop their level of independence. Aspire
- Achieve their potential in terms of academic achievement, aesthetic appreciation, spiritual awareness, social interaction and physical coordination and movement. Aspire

## **4. The Principles of Teaching and Learning**

QEGS is a boys' school and as such we aim to provide a 'boy friendly' curriculum where teaching and learning is tailored to the needs and desires of boys. Teachers adapt their planning and teaching to reflect this, ensuring that pupils are motivated and learn at their optimum level. At QEGS we see teaching and learning as a process of cooperation and teamwork and as such welcome the involvement and input of parents and other members of the wider school community.

All members of the school community (teaching and non-teaching staff, parents, pupils and governors) should work towards shared aims of the school by:

- Valuing children as individuals and respecting their rights, values and beliefs.
- Fostering and promoting good relationships and a sense of belonging to the school community.
- Providing a well ordered and safe environment in which all members are fully aware of behavioural expectations and standards
- Offering equal opportunities in all areas of school life taking into account the importance of different cultures.
- Encouraging, praising and positively reinforcing good behaviour, work and relationships.

- Working as part of a team to support and encourage one another.
- Aspiring to be the best version of themselves.

### **Teachers' Role**

- Provide a challenging and stimulating curriculum that is designed to allow all pupils to reach the highest possible standards of personal achievement.
- Recognising and being constantly aware of the needs of the individual child according to their ability, aptitude and preferred learning styles.
- Ensuring that learning is continuous and progressive.
- Being good role models: punctual, well prepared and organised.
- Maintaining an up to date knowledge of subject specifications, pedagogical innovation and other relevant educational initiatives.
- Having a positive attitude to change and the development of their own knowledge and expertise.
- Attempting to establish links with the local community, in order to help prepare pupils for the opportunities, experiences and responsibilities of adult life.
- Working collaboratively with pupils, staff and parents in order to share the school's philosophy and practice.
- Keeping parents regularly informed of their child's/children's progress and attainment.
- Meeting the Teachers' Standards as outlined in the PD documentation.

### **Pupils' Role**

- Attending school in good health maintained by adequate diet, exercise and rest/sleep.
- Regular school attendance.
- Being punctual and ready to start lessons on time.
- Being organised, having the required kit and equipment with them.
- Conducting themselves in an orderly manner in line with the expected code of discipline and school rules/guidelines.
- Being resilient and persevering with challenging tasks.
- Taking ever increasing responsibility for their own learning.
- Fulfilling their potential

### **Parents' Role**

- Ensuring that children attend school in good health, regularly and punctually.
- Providing support for the discipline of the school and for the teacher's role in this process.
- Being supportive of their child's interests and offering praise and encouragement where and when appropriate.
- Participate in discussions concerning their child's progress and attainment levels.
- Ensuring early contact with the school to discuss matters which affect their child's progress, behaviour and well being.
- Emphasising the importance of homework.
- Allowing their child to take an ever-increasing responsibility for their own work and actions as they progress through the school.

The QEGS Curriculum is organised on a subject basis, with specialist subject teachers delivering all lessons in Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 - see Curriculum Policy for further details.

The main modes of working are individual work, paired work, group work and whole class teaching.

Within this structure, teaching groups are usually of mixed ability although there are occasions where pupils with similar abilities may be asked to work together in Physical

Education, Games, Music, and in the organisation of the classes to help match pupils of similar ability in Mathematics (from Year 9 onwards) and Science (Year 10 onwards).

Discussion and debate is encouraged in lessons although this may be more relevant in some subjects or topics than others.

Heads of Department, in conjunction with their subject teams, are responsible for designing the content of the curriculum in their subject area(s). Planning is done collaboratively and reviewed regularly - there are Dept meetings built into the meeting timetable to facilitate this. Work done at home is considered to be a valuable element of the teaching and learning process and as such the school has a Homework Policy. The school recognises the value of learning from 'first hand experience' and we encourage and look for opportunity within the curriculum for pupils to take an element of control for their own learning and therefore:

- Pupils are encouraged to communicate their findings in a variety of ways. e.g written work, diagrams, discussions/debates or use of ICT.
- Opportunities are provided for pupils to become involved in the decision making process. The Pupil Voice meetings are a good example of this.
- Investigative work is encouraged

Excellence in work and performance is celebrated:

- Pupils are given the chance to have work of a high standard put on display both in school and on our social media platforms. Eg. Artist of the Week.
- Sustained effort including drafting and redrafting is encouraged to enhance standards
- School events such as matches, concerts and plays are seen as opportunities for all (not just the most gifted) to demonstrate their own best performances
- Pupils are encouraged to value work which is displayed or selection for teams, concerts or plays. Merits are awarded to recognise positive attainment, effort or other contributions and Certificates to recognise achievement levels (Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum) are issued accordingly (see Behaviour Policy).
- We take advantage of regional and national competitions to offer stretch & challenge to our boys. Eg. Maths Challenge, Biology Olympiad, Articulation.

## **5. Feedback to pupils**

Feedback to pupils about their own progress is of vital importance and has a significant impact on pupil progress and motivation. High quality feedback occurs in a number of ways including:

- Written marking comments made by the teacher.
- Verbal feedback given by the teacher.
- Comments recorded by the pupils after verbal feedback has been given
- Peer-evaluation: Verbal and written feedback given by other pupils, guided by clear success criteria and structured by the teacher
- Self-evaluation: The pupil's own evaluation of their work, guided by clear success criteria and structured by the teacher

The school expects teachers to offer effective communication of the pupil's successes and next steps/targets for learning. Effective marking should always help pupils learn, not find fault, and comments should be positive and constructive.

Formative assessment is used to help guide the progress of individual pupils. It involves identifying each pupil's progress in areas of the curriculum, determining what each pupil has learned and what, therefore, should be the next stage of their learning. Formative assessment is mostly carried out informally in the course of teaching and is planned for within curriculum structures.

## **6. Strategies for Ensuring Progress and Continuity**

Planning is process in which all teachers are involved:

Current practice is updated and added to by regular meetings of subject teams. Minutes are kept and shared with the SLT to ensure continuity. HoDs have the opportunity to meet with their Head of Faculty built into the timetable each cycle. HoFs meet with the Director of Studies (Staff) both individually and on a fortnightly group basis.

Schemes of Work are constructed for all Key Stages in each individual subject. These are developed and continually reviewed by subject co-ordinators in consultation with other staff that teach the subject and the Academic Office.

Teachers' marking is monitored to ensure consistency and adherence to the school's expectations.

Regular staff meetings are used to discuss various aspects of the curriculum and to ensure that there is a consistency of approach and standards.

Heads of Faculty and Department have a variety of roles in the Teaching and Learning process:

- To take the lead in policy development and production of Schemes of Work, which should be designed to ensure progression, continuity and appropriate topic coverage throughout the school.
- Support colleagues in their development of detailed lesson plans, ways to implement the Schemes of Work and help with assessment and recording methods within their subject.
- Ensure the department's Firefly pages are reviewed to accurately reflect the resources needed to support their schemes of work.
- Sampling of work to ensure continuity and curriculum coverage.
- Monitor progress as well as teaching and learning within their subject and advise the Head and SLT of any action or initiatives that they hope to implement.
- Take responsibility for the ordering and purchasing of resources for their subject(s) and manage their budget accordingly.
- HoDs are given time to allow them to support and monitor colleagues in the classroom, including conducting formal lesson observations as well as mentoring and coaching opportunities.
- Advise on relevant INSET courses for teachers of their subject.
- To keep up to date with current and new initiatives, resources or INSET courses relevant to their subject area.
- A programme of lesson observation is in place to promote best practice and ensure high standards are maintained. This is currently organised by the Professional Skills lead. Members of the SLT and Heads of Department are encouraged to evaluate the teaching and learning in their subject and suggest/provide appropriate CPD to maintain high standards. All staff are expected to reflect on their own strengths and areas for development, and are encouraged to make suggestions for their own CPD. Cross phase continuity is being developed by arranging meetings with subject co-ordinators in KS2 and KS3.

Reporting to parents is done regularly, via the Firefly Learning Platform, in the autumn and summer terms and at the end of the academic year. Parents are asked to attend at least one 'Parents' Evening' in the school year. Parents' evenings are held in person after school hours. Parents' may meet their son's teacher(s) by appointment at any other time to discuss particular concerns. The school may initiate the above process as well as the parents.

Pupils and staff act together to establish an attractive, welcoming and well organised environment that shows respect, care and value for all resources. Specific, subject-specific resources are the responsibility of the Head of Department, each of whom has a budget available.

Time is a valuable resource - to make the most of it:

As children progress through the school they are encouraged to take greater control of their own time management, including learning.

Teachers ensure that tasks are made specific and have a clear definition of an expected completion, reducing time wasting.

All pupils are encouraged to engage in useful activities immediately on entering the classroom and know what to do when a given activity is completed.

Information Technology is a major resource that is used across the whole curriculum; each member of the school is issued with a school Chromebook and associated email and Google for Education account. All teaching groups have their own Google Classroom.

The Learning Hub is a valued resource, supervised by the Learning Hub Manager and used regularly by all pupils.

## **7. Learning Support and SEND (including pupils with EAL)**

QEGS is committed to ensuring that the learning of all pupils is supported effectively. Please see the Learning Support Policy for specific details on how pupils are identified and supported.

## **8. Able, Gifted and Talented**

QEGS aims to ensure that all pupils, including 'able, gifted and talented' pupils, are being appropriately stretched, challenged and extended in their learning. Please see the separate Able, Gifted and Talented Policy.

## **9. Social, moral, spiritual and cultural education**

We recognise that the personal development of pupils, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally (SMSC) plays a significant part in their ability to learn and achieve, and has a huge impact on their future well-being. We therefore aim to provide an education that provides pupils with opportunities to explore and develop:

- their own values and beliefs,
- spiritual awareness,
- high standards of personal behaviour,
- a positive, caring attitude towards other people,
- an understanding of their social and cultural traditions,
- an appreciation of the diversity and richness of other cultures.

SMSC is a dimension of the whole school experience which makes the curriculum relevant, stimulating, creative and fun. It enriches every subject and the wider school environment. Specific aspects are explicitly taught during PSHE and RPE lessons, although opportunities to promote SMSC development are sought in all areas of school life.

All adults will model and promote expected behaviour, treating all people as unique and valuable individuals and showing respect for pupils and their families.

The school community will be a place where pupils can find acceptance for themselves as unique individuals and where forgiveness and the opportunity to start again is fundamental to the ethos of the school.

Pupils learn to differentiate between right and wrong as far as their actions affect other people. They will be encouraged to value themselves and others.

Pupils should understand the need for rules and the need to abide by rules for the good of everyone. School and classroom rules should reflect, reiterate, promote and reward acceptable behaviour and provide opportunities to celebrate pupils' work and achievements.

All curriculum areas should seek to use illustrations and examples drawn from as wide a range of cultural contexts as possible. This will be reflected in the teacher's planning decisions.

## **10. British values**

The DfE have outlined the need "to create and enforce a clear and rigorous expectation on all schools to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs."

The Government set out its definition of British values in the 2011 Prevent Strategy, and these values have been reiterated in 2014. QEGS reinforces these values regularly and in the following ways:

Democracy: Pupils have many opportunities for their voices to be heard. We have a school council which is elected and meets regularly to discuss issues raised by groups and individuals. The council is able to genuinely effect change within the school. Democracy is also taught explicitly as part of the PSHE curriculum. The Rule of Law: The importance of Laws, whether they be those that govern the class, the school, or the country, are regularly reinforced through school assemblies, as well as when dealing with behaviour. Pupils are taught the value and reasons behind laws, that they govern and protect us, the responsibilities that this involves and the consequences when laws are broken. Visits from authorities such as the Police and Fire Service help reinforce this message.

Individual Liberty: Within school, pupils are actively encouraged to make choices, knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment. As a school we educate and provide boundaries for young pupils to make choices safely, through provision of a safe environment and empowering education. Pupils are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and advised how to exercise these safely, for example through our E-Safety and PSHE lessons. Whether it be through choice of learning challenge, of how they record, or participation in our numerous extra-curricular clubs and opportunities, pupils are given the freedom to make choices.

Mutual Respect: Mutual respect is at the heart of our values. Pupils learn that their behaviours have an effect on their own rights and those of others. All members of the

school community treat each other with respect. Age appropriate PSHE lessons support this. Eg. 'Consent' is covered in KS5.

Tolerance of those of Different Faiths and Beliefs: We place a great emphasis on celebrating the diversity of our school community. Assemblies are regularly planned to address this issue either directly or through the inclusion of stories and celebrations from a variety of faiths and cultures. Our RS and PSHE teaching reinforces this. Members of different faiths or religions are encouraged to share their knowledge to enhance learning within classes and the school. Children visit places of worship that are important to different faiths.

## **11. Health and safety**

Health and safety issues are the responsibility of all who work in the school. Staff are questioned about any issues of Health and Safety that appertain to QEGS as a regular point during staff meetings. There is an online system for the reporting of health and safety issues, though staff must report issues immediately, where necessary.

Wider health and safety issues are dealt with by a cross Foundation policy that is overseen by the Risk Committee and the Health and Safety Manager. Please see the separate Health and Safety Policy. Risk assessments are completed for certain subjects and teaching spaces to ensure safe working.

## **12. Safeguarding**

Staff at QEGS recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children and young people. We acknowledge that children and young people can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. We have adopted the procedures set out in the WGSF Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in accordance with the statutory guidance, where further details can be found about Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguard Lead roles and the role we all must play in safeguarding our pupils.

## **13. Data Storage**

We ensure that pupils' personal data, including any information relating to their individual needs, assessments and interventions is maintained securely at all times. (General Data Protection Regulation: May 2018). For more information on the way personal data is stored and processed refer to the Privacy Notices and Data Protection Policy.

## **14. Equal Opportunities**

We believe all pupils in the school should have equal opportunities and equal access to the curriculum giving them the opportunity to learn and make progress, enabling them to fulfil their potential. All pupils are respected for their individuality and have their talents recognised, valued and nurtured. Curriculum activities and the use of equipment offer pupils opportunities to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination against age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation (as outlined as 'protected characteristics' in the 2010 Equalities Act).