

Kings International College – Teaching and Learning Policy

Vision

All members of the College community are continuously engaged in a safe, supportive, challenging, exciting and innovative learning environment.

Aims

- At Kings International we undertake to:
- Raise levels of attainment for all students, enabling them to achieve their personal best
- Develop confident, disciplined and enquiring learners, able to make informed choices
- Foster a love of learning
- Ensure equal opportunities in relation to gender, race, special educational needs and belief
- Value and respect all cultures
- Develop effective links with the community to extend the curriculum and enhance learning

Core Principles

- There is no known ceiling to achievement; our belief is that intelligence can be developed
- Every student has the right to be successful and the ability to achieve
- Build on what the learners already know. Structure and pace the teaching so that they understand what is to be learnt, how and why
- Make learning an enjoyable and challenging experience
- To ensure consistency of experience for every student
- Develop independent and enterprising citizens

Effective learning and teaching

For learning to be effective students should experience learning that is personalised to address their specific needs.

Good teaching fosters good learning. It stems from effective lesson design whatever the age of the learner, their level of ability or the subject or skills being learned. Good learning occurs when teachers:

- Focus and structure their teaching so that students are clear about what is to be learned, how it is to be learned and how it fits with what they know already;
- Actively engage students in their learning so that they make their own meaning from it
- Develop students' learning skills so that learning becomes increasingly independent
- Use assessment for learning to help students reflect on what they already know, reinforce their learning and set future targets
- Have high expectations of the effort that students should make and what they can achieve
- Make the learning motivating by using stimulating activities matched to a range of learning styles
- Create an environment that promotes learning in a settled and purposeful atmosphere.

Teaching and Learning

- Students should be taught how to learn and how to reflect on their learning
- Learning outcomes must be shared and reviewed
- Lessons must be structured to promote learning for all
- Set high expectations
- Teachers must create and maintain a purposeful learning environment
- Achievement must be recognised and rewarded appropriately
- Underachievement must be challenged

Teaching and Learning

It is important that we teach students how to “learn to learn” in order to become independent learners and develop skills for life-long learning.

Learning to Learn

Students need to be aware of different learning strategies they could use in order to further develop their knowledge, understanding and skills.

Learning to learn strategies include:

- Explaining different learning methods (e.g. 6 thinking hats) in order to aid memory, or develop effective ways of revising, recording notes, summarising; teaching students how to use them and giving students regular opportunities to use them in class.
- To promote personal, learning and thinking skills such as students being effective participants, self-managers, independent and reflective learners, team players and creative thinkers.
- Making the purpose of individual activities explicit
- Making what effective learning looks like and/or feels like explicit
- Regularly giving students opportunities to reflect upon their learning and learning strategies used (e.g. in the form of a written evaluation, pair-work and/or whole-class discussion of what students have learned and how)
- Regularly incorporating a learning to learn objective as one of the lesson’s outcomes (e.g. today we will learn how to...)
- Sharing/discussion of the assessment criteria
- Peer and self-assessment activities
- Scaffolding (writing frames, sentence starters)
- Modelling (sharing students’ work, working through examples, guided writing, sharing planning and demonstrations)
- Explaining/referring to strategies students should be using to develop their organisational skills
- Formative feedback and target setting on how to improve

Learning outcomes must be shared and reviewed

If students are to take responsibility for their own learning, they need to know what they are expected to learn and how they can achieve it. Providing outcomes allows students to engage with the process of learning.

Teachers must make the learning outcomes explicit to all students.

- This should happen before the lesson’s core activities
- Outcomes must be written or projected on the board as well as shared orally
- Outcomes should ideally be differentiated (by the end of this lesson all of you should be able to..., most of you..., some of you)
- Outcomes should refer to skills and/or learning to learn strategies rather than activities

These outcomes must be revisited throughout the lesson. This can be done in a variety of ways:

- Students review their learning against the lesson outcomes
- Teacher questions with differentiation by questioning

The outcomes must then be referred to at the end of the lesson (i.e. in the plenary). This could be done in the following ways:

- Students again review their learning against the lesson outcomes
- Teacher again questions with differentiation by questioning
- An interactive whiteboard/worksheet/speaking activity or game which serves to summarise learning
- Students asked to discuss and explain what they have learned and how
- Teacher recaps and provides feedback

The Structure of Lessons

Clearly structured lessons promote learning. Lessons should be structured in three parts: a starter activity, core activities, and a plenary.

- **Starter activities:** the purpose of a starter activity is to engage students, absorb stragglers, monitor previous learning of material relevant to the lesson or consolidate previously covered material (**see handbook for ideas and strategies**).
- **Core activities:** there should be a clear learning objective to each core activity; the link between each core activity and the lesson's outcomes should be clear; core activities should involve use of a variety of resources; core activities should aim to develop students' skills as well as knowledge and understanding; core activities should be varied in nature (e.g. different tasks, learning methods, pair work/group work/individual work); core activities should be challenging and differentiated.
- **Plenaries:** The purpose of the plenary is to assess students' understanding in relation to the lesson's outcomes and therefore to inform the teacher's planning of the next lesson. It will often provide students with an opportunity to reflect on and discuss their learning. It might incorporate an activity which leads students' onto the next phase of their learning. Plenaries also provide teachers with an opportunity for the teacher to summarise and give constructive feedback to the class in relation to progress made (see handbook for ideas and strategies).

Homework:

It is essential that homework instructions be given in sufficient time to allow all students to write the instructions into their planners and ask questions if unclear. Rushed setting of homework at the end of a lesson discriminates against weaker students and students with learning difficulties.

Variety of activities

Students learn in different ways. Recognising this and planning for it provides stimulus and is inclusive.

- A range of teacher led and student centred activities should be used
- Teachers must use a range of teaching strategies to take account of learning needs of all students
- Administration tasks should be kept to a minimum during lessons to ensure thorough supervision of the class.
- Students must have the opportunity to work in a variety of ways, such as: individually, in pairs, small groups, whole class situations
- Differentiation (**refer to the 'AFL and the differentiation handbook'**) is a powerful tool for student learning in the classroom and at home. This will take many forms and can include:
 - differentiation by outcome
 - differentiation by task
 - differentiation by question
 - developing and adapting resources to both support and extend students taking into account all students' needs
 - the use of student groupings
- Students must be made aware of the language of learning so that they can address their own targets

Making Learning Happen

Students should:

- Arrive on time, ready to learn
- Engage with the lesson quickly
- Participate in activities as directed and ask questions
- Respond to feedback from the teacher in books

- Know current grade and how to improve
- Work to a high standard in books

Teachers should:

- Plan challenging and engaging lessons
- Share planned objectives that lead to learning
- Select activities that link to learning
- Check regular written and verbal feedback to which students respond

Plan and set regular homework that supports and extends learning

Assessment

The Assessment for Learning Strategy underpins our assessment practice throughout the whole College. The effective assessment and marking of work are fundamental to successful learning and teaching. All assessment information should be used formatively.

Formative Assessment

The aim of formative assessment is to give students clear guidance about how to improve their work. Students must be told of the assessment criteria for both class work and homework tasks.

- All work that is formally assessed must receive formative comments. **It is the expectation that written feedback is given on a regular basis defined as a minimum once per half term.** This will usually be in writing. When formative feedback is given verbally by the teacher, it may be appropriate for it to be recorded by students in exercise books or files.
- Opportunities should be given for students to act upon the guidance. This could be done through class or homework, for example:
 - a starter or a plenary activity
 - discussion with the student
 - a peer assessment activity
 - peer teaching
 - re-drafting pieces of work
- A formative comment should:
 - be concise and accessible for students
 - highlight achievement (www)
 - be diagnostic
 - indicate how improvement can be achieved, usually consisting of one or two targets(TI)
 - be personal by using the student's first name
 - encourage and support the student in a constructive way
 - encourage students to take ownership of their learning
- Peer and/or self - assessment should take place at least once a term in every subject area. The aim of self assessment is to enable students to be actively involved in the assessment process and give them ownership of their learning. There should be some means of recording and monitoring this.
 - an extended piece of written work
 - an investigation/project
 - a mid topic test
 - an end of unit test
- It is the responsibility of each Faculty to ensure that there is a clear rationale regarding the awarding of assessment grades. Grades should be moderated before being entered into Assessment Manager (SIMS) at the appropriate time, in particular by the HoF.

Assessment & Marking

Assessment must be formative and used to inform learning

Assessment for learning strategies must be used to encourage all students to 'learn to learn'

Feedback, whether written or verbal, should be positive and diagnostic.

When marking

A minimum of one core piece of work should normally be identified in each half term for which students should be given an interim level/grade appropriate to the Key Stage.

Records of students' marks and homework, classwork, and assessments must be kept by individual staff.

Seating plans should be coloured coded using the traffic light system to highlight the progress students are making against their 'challenge targets'.

Inclusion

Every student at Kings International College has the right to receive the highest quality education. It is our responsibility to ensure that their educational needs are met. Ensuring inclusion involves

- setting suitable differentiated learning challenges
- responding to students' diverse learning needs
- working to overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment

Different groups of students have specific needs which the College supports in a number of ways:

- SEN/EAL
- Information on students with SEN/EAL needs is available on shared documents on the desk top and 'T' drive. This information should be entered in all mark books and on seating plans. Also, targets discussed with students and TAs where necessary.

It is imperative that information regarding these students is returned promptly when requested.

The SEN department will support staff in meeting the needs of students. This will include providing information and guidance on appropriate teaching strategies, and the adaptation and provision of teaching resources

Gifted and Talented

Each department is responsible for ensuring the needs of Gifted and Talented students are met. Departments should ensure that appropriate extension activities with challenge are planned and integrated into the lesson as appropriate rather than tasks seen as something extra to do if work completed.

Learning Support Assistants

- The College will assign TAs to support the teacher in meeting the diverse learning needs of students
- They will work with teachers both within the classroom environment and outside the classroom at the direction of the teacher
- It is the responsibility of the teacher to provide appropriate guidance to the TA. The teacher is responsible for the planning of work
- There should be regular communication between teachers and TAs about how teaching can be structured to support students. TAs will often have in-depth knowledge of the student being supported

ICT, Literacy and Numeracy

ICT, Literacy and Numeracy skills underpin learning across the curriculum. These must be promoted in all groups, in all subject areas. The main points are listed below.

Literacy

All teachers undertake to use a common language to reinforce literacy skills in the national curriculum areas of reading, writing, speaking and listening. The models and skills descriptors for these are summarised and should be embedded into every scheme of work.

Numeracy

All teachers undertake to reinforce the following numeracy skills:

- mental maths skills, including thinking time and explanation of their methods;
- representation of data in a tabular or graphical form;
- use of consistent mathematical notation.

ICT

All teachers undertake to reinforce to students the skills they have learnt in ICT in particular when the students are using:

- presentation software;
- internet search engines.

Inclusion

- Every student is entitled to a positive, meaningful learning experience
- Every teacher has a responsibility to meet the educational needs of all students
- Learning challenges must be differentiated to ensure inclusion
- SEN/EAL/G&T information must be recorded and used to inform learning and teaching
- Every teacher is responsible for promoting Literacy, Numeracy and IT
- There should be regular communication between teachers and assigned TAs. It is the responsibility of the teacher to plan the work and to provide appropriate guidance to the LSA

Monitoring of Learning and Teaching

The monitoring of teaching is done through regular observation of lessons and learning walks. The observation recording sheet is designed to assess and support improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. All staff will have a minimum of two graded observations, normally carried out by a line manager or a trained, experienced colleague, as part of their Performance Review. Key staff will be monitored and receive intensive support throughout the year to raise their level of performance, in particular those staff performing at a satisfactory level.

In addition to the above it is expected that all teaching staff will have involvement in developmental observations (ungraded), both as an observer and an observed practitioner. It is the responsibility of every teacher to ensure that effective learning is taking place within every class they teach. The HOF has the responsibility of monitoring teaching and learning within the department.

The effectiveness of teaching and learning is evidenced through assessment. This is on-going and requires regular and systematic collection and recording of a student's

achievement. Individual class teachers assess within the department framework, which ultimately feeds into the whole College assessment process.

The criteria for assessment must be agreed at the planning stage. Teaching and learning should be designed in conjunction with assessment aims and the assessment cycle. Formal assessment of teaching and learning is made through the Performance Management process.

Target Setting and the use of Value-Added Data

As part of our continued drive to improve standards we use MiDYIS for KS3 students and FFTD, (these are subject-specific targets calculated using non-curricular tests at the beginning of all Key Stages) for KS4 students to set 'challenge targets', so that student progress every 6 weeks can be reviewed.

For KS3 assessments, National Curriculum levels should be entered into assessment manager based on the level the students are currently working to establish whether their current progress is in line with their challenge target. For example, Year 8 students may gain 2 or more mini levels in year.

For KS4 students the GCSE grades entered on assessment manager represent the predicted grades for the end of KS4 given their current trajectory of attainment.

Students should always be encouraged to reach or better their targets. All targets should be displayed in exercises books to ensure the students are aware of these and to evaluate their progress in learning at regular intervals.