

# Clounagh Junior High School



## TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

Date Ratified by BoG:

November 2025

Date for Review:

November 2027

## **1. Mission Statement**

The vision statement and aims of Clounagh Junior High School is at the heart of our approach to teaching and learning. We want our pupils to become:

- Successful Learners who enjoy and understand their own learning and who know what they need to do to make progress and fulfil their potential.
- Confident Individuals who are equipped with the skills to adapt to and cope with an ever-changing global society.
- Responsible Citizens who demonstrate a commitment to themselves, friends, family, their local community and the wider world.

## **2. Aims**

This policy aims to:

1. Explain how we'll create an environment at our school of high expectations where students learn best and love to do so
2. Summarize expectations to make sure all staff have clarity and understanding about what excellent teaching and learning looks like across the school and in their own subject specialism.
3. Ensure all members of school community recognize the importance of excellent Teaching and Learning and a robust curriculum is our most powerful tool to achieve excellent inclusion and equality across the school.
4. Ensure all staff have the skills and knowledge to identify gaps in students' learning and to address this through their teaching.

## **3. Rationale**

In Clounagh we aim to inspire our students to be confident and open-minded through exceptional teaching in a caring school community.

Our vision is to be an exceptional school; inclusive and progressive, where everyone matters and everyone achieves.

Our belief is that education is transformational. Our role is to support all of our students to succeed irrespective of their starting points. We understand that 'equal' treatment is not always sufficient to give 'equitable' outcomes – some students need more than others. We are committed to giving students whatever support they need to ensure they make the progress necessary to get the successful outcomes that they deserve. We work tirelessly to remove barriers to learning for all students. We believe that relationships are the most important thing in schools. The way that staff and students relate to each other is fundamental to the success of what we are trying to achieve.

## 4. Responsibilities

Teaching and learning in our school is a shared responsibility, and everyone in our school community has an important role to play.

Teachers at our school will:

- Follow the expectations for teaching and professional conduct as set out in the Teachers' Standards
- Follow the expectations as set out in this policy
- Update parents/carers on students' progress through termly reports on progress and yearly parent/carers consultation evenings.

Support staff at our school will:

- Know students well and differentiate support to meet their individual learning needs
- Support teaching and learning with flexibility and resourcefulness
- Meet the expectations set out in this policy

Subject Leaders will:

- Help to create well-sequenced, broad and balanced curriculum that build knowledge and skills
- Sequence lessons in a way that allows students to make good progress
- Use their budget effectively to resource their subject, providing teachers with necessary resources for learning
- Drive improvement in their subject, working with teachers to identify any challenges
- Timetable their subject to allocate time for students to achieve breadth and depth, fully understand the topic and demonstrate excellence
- Moderate progress across their subject/phase by, for example, systematically reviewing progress against a range of evidence and reviewing performance data
- Improve on weaknesses identified in their monitoring activities
- Create and share clear intentions for their subject
- Encourage teachers to share ideas, resources and good practice

Senior leaders at our school will:

- Have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality, inclusive education to all
- Celebrate achievement and have high expectations for everyone
- Hold staff and students to account for their teaching and learning
- Plan and evaluate strategies to secure high-quality teaching and learning across school
- Manage resources to support high-quality teaching and learning

- Provide support and guidance to other staff through coaching and mentoring
- Input and monitor the impact of continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities to improve staff's practice and subject knowledge
- Promote team working at all levels
- Address underachievement and intervene promptly

Students at our school will:

- Take responsibility for their own learning, and support the learning of others
- Meet expectations for good behaviour for learning at all times
- Attend all lessons on time and be ready to learn, with all necessary equipment
- Be curious, ambitious, engaged and confident learners
- Know their targets and how to improve
- Put maximum effort and focus into their work
- Complete home learning activities as required

Parents and carers of students at our school will:

- Value learning and encourage their child as a learner
- Make sure their child is ready and able to learn every day
- Support good attendance
- Participate in discussions about their child's progress and attainment
- Communicate with the school to share information promptly
- Encourage their child to take responsibility for their own learning
- Support and give importance to home learning

Governors at our school will:

- Monitor that resources and funding are allocated effectively to support the school's approach to teaching and learning
- Monitor the impact of teaching and learning strategies on students' progress
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation

## 5. Principles of Effective Teaching and Learning



- The teacher's subject expertise plays an important role in the learning process; as such, we are committed to having subject specialists in place and teachers are encouraged to model enthusiasm for their subject, keep up to date with developments in their subject and encourage the pupils to develop interest in the subject outside the classroom.
- Teachers' understanding of the pedagogy related to their subject is also essential for good teaching and learning to take place. Therefore, the school is committed to ensuring that teachers have the opportunity to develop in this regard. This includes both internal and external INSET opportunities.
- Teachers will aim to create an effective climate for learning. At Clounagh, whilst we have high expectations for our pupils, we also place great importance on building relationships with students which are conducive to learning and which reflect the belief that learning is a social and collaborative activity.
- Good teaching and learning are carefully planned for: schemes of work are developed and agreed within departments and focus closely on pupil learning and a variety of teaching approaches.
- Lessons are carefully planned and effectively structured to focus on delivering the key learning intentions.
- Schemes of work and lesson plans include a range of resources and a range of adaptable and flexible teaching and learning approaches which respond to the diversity in the classroom. Teachers' awareness of the different learning needs will also take account of any relevant IEPs/PLPs.
- Schemes of work and lesson plans ensure that there is a relevant emphasis on literacy and numeracy which is in line with the school's policies on the same.

- Assessment approaches will be formative as well as summative. This means that:
  - Learning Intentions are shared and reviewed with students throughout the lesson; likewise, students are aware of, and often will have negotiated success criteria for key assessments.
  - Effective questioning is used in the classroom.
  - Effective feedback is given to pupils and pupils are given time to respond to opportunities for improvement.
  - Peer and self-assessment are used to encourage meta-cognition. The goal of any such activities is to encourage improvement and, ultimately, independent learning.
  - Deliberate Practice is encouraged and embedded across the curriculum.
- Summative and formative assessments and other forms of data (through SIMS, for example,) are used to inform teaching and learning and to encourage progress and improvement.
- Collaborative and interactive learning are encouraged through a range of activities in the classroom. Lessons should, where appropriate provide students with opportunities to work independently, collaboratively and to take leadership roles. Lessons should have a balance of practical, written and oral work.

## 6. Leadership of Teaching and Learning

*‘There is widespread agreement now that all of the factors inside the school affect children’s learning and achievement, the most important is the teacher...’*  
(Hargreaves and Fullan)

As a school, we recognise the significant role teachers play in the successes and achievements of all of our pupils. As such, it is our goal that all of the lessons delivered will help our pupils to become engaged and independent learners who will leave us with a lifelong love of learning, ready to play their part as global citizens of the twenty-first century world. Clounagh recognises that high quality Teaching and Learning is a collective responsibility and that interactions among and between teachers are crucially important in this regard. Lesson plan templates and support materials focus on a clear understanding of how students best learn and on a recognition of the factors which have the greatest impact on learning.

The models below reflect our guiding principles.

# THE PRINCIPLES OF INSTRUCTION

## TAKEN FROM THE INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF EDUCATION

This poster is from the work of Barak Rosenshine who based these ten principles of instruction and suggested classroom practices on:

- research on how the brain acquires and uses new information
- research on the classroom practices of those teachers whose students show the highest gains
- findings from studies that taught learning strategies to students.

**HOW2**  
teachinghow2s.com

### 01 DAILY REVIEW



Daily review is an important component of instruction. It helps strengthen the connections of the material learned. Automatic recall frees working memory for problem solving and creativity.

### 02 NEW MATERIAL IN SMALL STEPS



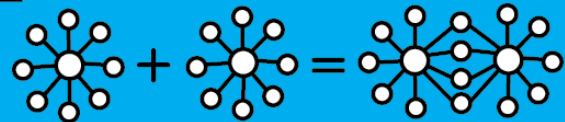
Our working memory is small, only handling a few bits of information at once. Avoid its overload — present new material in small steps and proceed only when first steps are mastered.

### 03 ASK QUESTIONS



The most successful teachers spend more than half the class time lecturing, demonstrating and asking questions. Questions allow the teacher to determine how well the material is learned.

### 04 PROVIDE MODELS



Students need cognitive support to help them learn how to solve problems. Modelling, worked examples and teacher thinking out loud help clarify the specific steps involved.

### 05 GUIDE STUDENT PRACTICE



Students need additional time to rephrase, elaborate and summarise new material in order to store it in their long-term memory. More successful teachers built in more time for this.

### 06 CHECK STUDENT UNDERSTANDING



Less successful teachers merely ask "Are there any questions?" No questions are taken to mean no problems. False. By contrast, more successful teachers check on all students.

### 07 OBTAIN HIGH SUCCESS RATE



A success rate of around 80% has been found to be optimal, showing students are learning and also being challenged. Better teachers taught in small steps followed by practice.

### 08 SCAFFOLDS FOR DIFFICULT TASKS



Scaffolds are temporary supports to assist learning. They can include modelling, teacher thinking aloud, cue cards and checklists. Scaffolds are part of cognitive apprenticeship.

### 09 INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

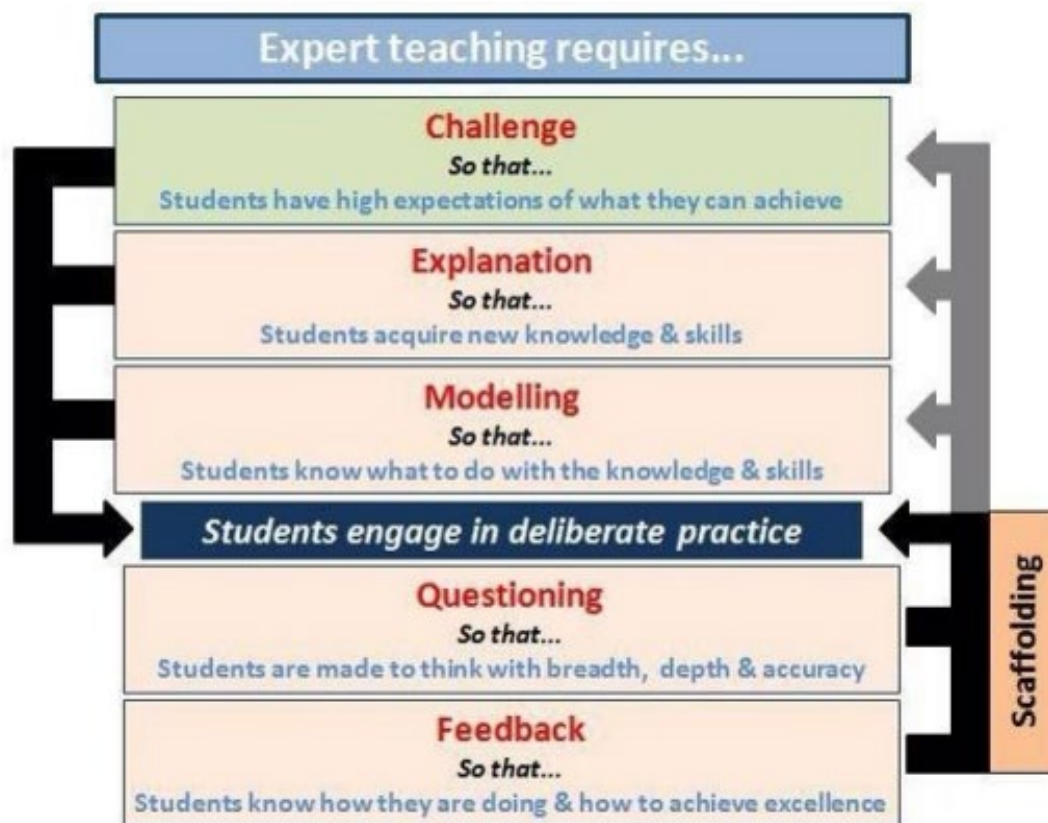


Independent practice produces 'overlearning' — a necessary process for new material to be recalled automatically. This ensures no overloading of students' working memory.

### 10 WEEKLY & MONTHLY REVIEW



The effort involved in recalling recently-learned material embeds it in long-term memory. And the more this happens, the easier it is to connect new material to such prior knowledge.



(Allison and Tharby: Making Every Lesson Count)

## 7. Sharing Good Practice

- Monthly departmental meetings aim to focus primarily on teaching and learning
- Subject Leader meetings aim to take time to reflect on and share good practice
- Staff Development Days give priority to Teaching and Learning; opportunities will be given for staff to reflect on and share good practice both within and across departments
- Further sharing of good practice will be encouraged by: lesson observations; PLC discussions, shared areas within google drive and dissemination of relevant research by Mr Carville.

## 8. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Priorities for the year will be established in line with the School Development Plan and in response to training needs which may have been identified through PRSD or line management meetings.
- In line with the PRSD structure, all teachers will be observed for one hour each year. Observations may be conducted by line managers and/or the Principal.
- Line managers will play a key role in supporting the leading of teaching and learning in individual departments; line management meetings should facilitate discussion of the same and follow-up support will be offered where required.



- If any of the review structures reveal areas of concern with the performance of individual teachers, a programme of support will be drawn up, following the procedures outlined in TNC 2025/2: *Procedure for Supporting Effective Teaching in Schools*.