

ABERDARE COMMUNITY SCHOOL



Teaching and Learning Policy

Agreed

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(Headteacher)

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(Chair of Governing Body)

1. Aiming for Excellence

A commitment to excellence is at the heart of our ambition for teaching and learning at Aberdare Community School.

We believe that **excellent teaching** includes:

- Thorough and well-established management of classrooms with clear routines
- Rigorous planning
- Excellent communication
- Innovative teaching methods with a wide variety of activities to meet the needs of the learner
- Stimulating activities
- Positive learning environments where pupils feel motivated and inspired
- A balance of subject and skills knowledge
- Sound subject knowledge
- Skilful implementation of LNF & DCF
- Effective relationships where pupils are listened to
- Clear learning objectives
- High expectations for all
- All pupils are challenged
- Effective questioning
- Development of independent learning
- Good language modelling
- Progression in learning
- Use of high quality & interesting resources
- Regular assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress
- Regular feedback which is understood by pupils

Aberdare Community School expects students to:

- Take responsibility for their own learning and strive to become independent, life-long learners
- Enjoy their learning experiences
- Learn to be resilient when things do not go as planned
- Actively participate and be willing to take risks
- Approach their learning with enthusiasm and a positive attitude.
- Be organised and come to lessons, on time, with the correct equipment
- Incorporate new knowledge into daily life, activities and other subjects
- Be good listeners

- Be critical thinkers
- Be open to new ideas
- Behave well

At Aberdare Community School, we consider excellent learning takes place within the six-part continuum:

1. Establish

Where pupils are welcomed into a positive learning environment and where high expectations are set in terms of positive behaviour and attainment with no limits on achievement.

2. Engage

All learners are actively engaged in an activity within the first few minutes of a lesson. This phase requires the teacher to engage the learners in the learning which is about to take place. This could be in the form of a starter activity, a quiz, role-play etc. This work should be connected with previous learning where possible.

3. Deliver

This is the phase where the teacher provides the delivery of new knowledge, understanding, skills, etc., which are needed to access the next stage of learning. This could be in the form of a demonstration, stimuli etc.

4. Demonstrate

This phase requires the learner to demonstrate the extent to which they can access the new level of learning in the form of worksheets, experiments, extended writing, etc.

5. Consolidate

This phase allows for consolidation and opportunities to reflect upon the learning in the form of a plenary session.

6. Reinforce

Pupils to leave the lesson in a positive manner to reinforce high expectations in terms of behaviour and learning ready for the next phase in the continuum of learning.

2. Assessment for Learning (AfL)

Both summative and formative assessment takes place continuously.

Formative assessment should be embedded within every lesson in the form of:

- **Pupil Led** – Meaningful **Peer-assessment** (thumbs up/down, mini w/b, etc.) and **Self-assessment** (drafting/annotating, target-setting, oral feedback to class)
- **Teacher-Led** – high-quality questioning with an appropriate balance of closed and open questions, with suitable wait times, to secure deep thinking. These questions are randomised - no hands-up!
- Evidence of formative assessment on written work should take place consistently within departments and should follow the **What Worked Well and Even Better If** formula. In keeping with the school's AfL philosophy, there will be **no grade or mark** on the work to allow a greater chance of pupils to respond to the comments. Time should be given for opportunities to respond to the comments and to feedback.

3. Common requirements are meaningful and relevant:

- Opportunities to develop literacy, numeracy and digital competency are at a level commensurate to the learners' ability and in line with the Literacy and Numeracy and Digital Competency Frameworks. Progress in these areas is meticulously planned with a literacy and/or numeracy focus expected in every lesson.
- Due respect is demonstrated for the Welsh language and culture.
- Learning Support Assistants work in partnership with teachers and students to genuinely augment learning.

4. Positive Learning Environment

- The learning environment is safe, secure, fair and equitable. The environment should itself be a learning stimulus with appropriate wall charts, posters, word walls, examples of pupils' work etc. prominently displayed.
- An atmosphere is created in which pupils feel confident to take risks and learn from their mistakes.
- There is effective communication. Pupils are listened to and mutual trust and respect is earned.
- Only genuine praise is used to motivate learners.

5. Behaviour for Learning

- Excellent standards of behaviour are insisted upon at all times. Positive and consistent BfL strategies are employed.

It is expected that a pupil arrives punctually to the lesson, with the correct equipment and ready to learn.

The equipment and individual planner is placed on the desk at the beginning of each lesson.

6. Monitoring Teaching and Learning and Sharing of Best Practice

The quality of learning and teaching is monitored regularly and via a number of whole school strategies.

- Each colleague has at least one full lesson observation per year. Two observers (SLT and subject specialist) improves the quality of feedback.
- Observations are not graded in keeping with the school's AfL philosophy. This will help develop an open door culture.
- Colleagues are encouraged to share best practice as much as possible through formal and informal learning walks.
- The quality of teaching and learning is evaluated through: 1) outcomes, 2) book reviews, 3) student voice, and 4) lesson observations. Much of this has been devolved to departments who regularly self-evaluate through QA meetings.
- Consistently good teaching results in excellent progress over time.

The quality of teaching and learning is also evaluated through the review of pupils' work and pupil voice.