



Holbrook Academy

TEACHING & LEARNING POLICY 2016

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Signed	F Rolfe (Acting Chair of Q&M Committee)	
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This policy takes account of the Academy's public sector equality duty set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required. It applies wherever staff or volunteers are working with students even where this is away from the Academy, for example at an activity centre or on an educational visit.

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1.0 Teaching and Learning

The development of teaching and learning is key to raising standards and achievement for students of all abilities. The Academy strives to provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows all students to develop their skills and attributes to their full potential in a stimulating environment that sets the climate for learning. Holbrook Academy recognises that good or better quality teaching, with appropriate intervention for those students not making progress, enables all students to reach their potential.

At Holbrook Academy every aspect of our day should be about driving forward teaching and learning. Every member of staff, in lessons, form times, assemblies and extra-curricular activities will focus on working towards our aspirations:

- Towards creating active participators in learning;
- Towards creating independent learners;
- Towards creating resilient learners;
- Towards creating personalised learning;
- Towards high aspirations;
- To have a clear vision of behaviours and attitudes of students and staff to ensure maximum progress in every lesson.

Expectations for Learning

For each of these aspirations we will need to show students **our expectations**:

- **Active participators** – will begin each lesson with the correct equipment, seeking the starter activity and using their initiative such as independent reading, checking and correcting marked work;
- **Independence** – using initiative; taking responsibility for learning and acting on targets; completing home learning with vigour and commitment;
- **Resilience** – teachers will encourage, they will not accept the first response; they will use questioning to encourage students to develop a deeper understanding and to persevere;
- **Personalised Learning** - Students will know their targets, they will know their current grade and they will have very clear guidelines about how they can move forward and progress. Teachers will use data and knowledge of individuals to inform planning of lessons to suit the ability and learning styles of the students;
- **Aspirations** - can be developed through teacher interest, enthusiasm and knowledge; home learning will help develop these aspirations; teachers will encourage extra-curricular events/trips/clubs to develop high aspirations; students will begin to recognise that **high aspirations are for all and are to be proud of**; the academy will communicate with parents to encourage high aspirations for all our students;
- Staff and students will know and understand the clear **behaviours for learning** which are expected and that when these are not adhered to, consequences will occur in a fair, consistent and persistent manner. (See Academy Behaviour & Rewards Policy)

2.0 Objectives

- To ensure a consistently good or outstanding approach to teaching in classrooms;
- To enable effective learning to take place in every classroom (determined by assessment outcome)
- To ensure that the focus is on young people and their learning;
- To make explicit our beliefs about the characteristics of an effective learner;
- To support those who face barriers to learning;
- To enable all members of the academy community to be successful learners.

As a result, the Academy will benefit from:-

- Well organised and well planned curriculum areas encompassing varied learning experiences;
- A consistent approach to teaching and learning;
- Progress data that reveals all students have met their potential.

Student Expectations

Holbrook Academy students have identified key features of a good lesson as being:

- Clear listening and focus throughout;
- Mutual respect;
- Learning something new/taking something away from the lesson;
- Positive attitude;
- Discussion and debate;
- Ambitious ideas or tasks.

They also identified aspects of a good lesson they would like to see teachers employ:

- Greater use of rewards and praise;
- More interactive/less book work;
- Active learning eg on the smart board;
- Collaborative learning;
- Creative ways of learning;
- Teacher and peer feedback

Expectations for Teachers

As teachers in Holbrook Academy we accept that we have expectations. The expectations of every teacher to help towards these aspirations are:

- Greet students at the door (our students have told us that good learners enjoy greeting their teacher)
- Ensure that the learning environment is one in which boundaries and expectations are clear and that achievement is encouraged with the use of praise and reward
- Create a stimulating starter ready as students enter the room for each lesson
- Actively involve students by challenge and develop resilience by challenging the first response or asking for it to be developed
- Create independent tasks which are stimulating and challenging

- Plan lessons which show clear evidence of assessment informed activities (see section 6.0); use the supportive classroom ideas to help students who find the learning more challenging; know your students and their learning needs
- Check progress and learning at suitable regular intervals throughout the lesson in a range of ways accessible to all students
- Develop an environment in which students take and seek responsibility for their learning – by independent tasks, by check and correct marking, by letting students have access to and ownership of marking criteria, by positive emphasis placed on self and peer assessment
- Develop and enhance the use of technology to help create stimulating and engaging lessons
- Ensure accurate assessment in order to learners to know how to improve – use moderation internally and also by linking up with other teachers in Suffolk to develop and ensure accuracy
- Every teacher in Holbrook Academy will seek professional development and develop their practice. For example through discussions post lesson observations; by using the 'Go To Group'; by CPD input as per discussion with their line manager and their performance management targets
- The Academy will support this development by allowing time for teachers to observe for learning from colleagues on a regular basis.

3.0 Development of Teaching and Learning

All staff are responsible for the development of Teaching and Learning within the Academy (monitored/directed by Heads of Faculty) by:

- Creating the ethos/shared values and expectations that reinforce high quality teaching and learning;
- Encouraging the development of effective teaching and learning styles;
- Ensuring an effective system of assessment, recording and reporting;
- Managing the monitoring and evaluation systems for teaching and learning across all curriculum areas;
- Identifying specific key groups (such as boys, those from disadvantaged families, SEN/D) and tracking their progress data to ensure they are making expected progress.
- Developing appropriate intervention packages for students facing barriers to their learning;

4.0 Key Aims

Heads of Faculty aim to ensure:

- Consistent behaviour for learning strategies and provision of engaging activities to reduce off task behaviour;
- Embedded strategies to support literacy and numeracy across the curriculum;
- Effective use of target setting and progress data to inform planning;
- That all students have appropriately challenging learning opportunities;
- The use of marking to support independence by indicating next steps in learning – ensuring students not only know their targets but are clear about how to reach them;
- Accurate, regular and helpful assessment to enable students to make good progress (including assessment for learning within the lesson);
- The creation of opportunities to develop students' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development;
- Strategies to support and develop independent learning;
- The use of home learning to reinforce and extend learning.

5.0 Monitoring and Evaluation of Teaching and Learning

The quality of teaching and learning will be monitored through the annual cycle of evaluation with each faculty being monitored through the Ofsted framework. Evidence will be drawn from lesson observations, past results, student progress (tracking data), review of student work, teacher feedback and home learning tasks (work scrutiny) and student and parent feedback (where available).

As part of their continuing professional development, all teachers will receive at least one formal observation per calendar year. In line with the Academy's Performance Management Policy, teachers judged as requiring improvement will be placed on support plans which will be monitored by the Heads of Faculty.

6.0 Literacy

'Every school should specialise in literacy and set targets for improvement in English. Similarly, every teacher should contribute to promoting it. In shaping their plans it is essential that schools do not see work on reading and writing as exclusively the province of a few teachers in the English and learning support departments.' (DFEE, 1997)

6.1 Introduction

The curriculum should offer opportunities for students to:

- ✓ engage in specific activities that develop speaking and listening skills as well as activities that integrate speaking and listening with reading and writing;
- ✓ develop speaking and listening skills through work that makes cross-curricular links with other subjects;
- ✓ develop reading skills through work that makes cross-curricular links with other subjects;
- ✓ develop writing skills through work that makes cross-curricular links with other subjects;
- ✓ work in sustained and practical ways, with writers where possible, to learn about the art, craft and discipline of writing;
- ✓ redraft their own work in the light of feedback. This could include self-evaluation using success criteria, recording and reviewing performances, target-setting and formal and informal use of peer assessment. Redrafting should be purposeful, moving beyond proofreading for errors to the reshaping of whole texts or parts of texts.

Literacy involves the ability to read and write; however, it is also the capacity to recognise, reproduce and manipulate the conventions of a range of texts. Literacy and English are intertwined and it is an important aspect of our ability to communicate.

Literacy is important because it enables students to gain access to the subjects studied in school, to read for information and pleasure, and to communicate effectively. Poor levels of literacy impact negatively on what students can do and have a negative impact on each student's self-esteem.

Holbrook Academy is committed to raising the standards of Literacy of all of its students, so that they develop the ability to use Literacy skills effectively in all areas of the curriculum and use it

as a platform to cope confidently with the demands of further education, employment and adult life.

6.2 Rationale

Literacy is essential to all learning throughout the school, in all years and across all subject areas, and we have high expectations for all students in terms of what they can achieve.

Effective delivery of literacy will broaden students' knowledge and experience, increase their ability to learn for themselves, build self-esteem and promote the development of good relationships.

Literacy underpins the school curriculum by developing students' abilities to speak, listen and communicate, to think, explore and organise.

This includes helping students to express themselves orally and in writing. All departments and all teachers have a crucial role to play in supporting students' literacy development.

Competent literacy skills also enable students to read, understand and access examination materials, so that students are able to achieve their educational potential across the curriculum. Effective delivery of literacy is of particular importance in the context of the attainment gap between boys and girls, which we feel is of significance at the Academy.

Particular care needs to be taken in ensuring that resources for learning and approaches to learning are effective for boys.

Our GCSE results show that there is a gender gap in attainment. Student perception and teacher feedback recognises that lengthy writing requirements often deter a number of our male students from writing well. Since many of the GCSE examinations assess students by lengthy writing questions, this is a crucial step to improving progress of students at Holbrook Academy.

At Holbrook Academy we recognise that our students have very good verbal skills but this is not always reflected in a high quality of writing. We have a low degree of accuracy in spelling and accuracy of grammar and punctuation.

Although some of our students enjoy reading, the love of reading is an area we need to develop for a wider range of students especially since the downgrading of the LRC in 2010 has hampered access to new texts and an enriching reading area.

At Holbrook Academy the Literacy Policy aims to address these main areas of concern in order that writing can be improved across the curriculum.

At Holbrook Academy we accept the fundamental principle that Literacy is the key to improving learning and raising standards across the curriculum. All members of staff have responsibility for the delivery of literacy across the curriculum.

All students should be encouraged to:

- ✓ make extended, independent contributions that develop ideas in depth;
- ✓ make purposeful presentations that allow them to speak with authority on significant subjects;
- ✓ engage with texts that challenge preconceptions and develop understanding beyond the personal and immediate;
- ✓ experiment with language and explore different ways of discovering and shaping their own meanings;
- ✓ use writing as a means of reflecting on and exploring a range of views and perspectives on the world.

6.3 Our aims in relation to literacy

We aim to:

- ✓ consistently develop students' skills in literacy in other subjects as well as English;
- ✓ adopt a whole school approach to literacy across the curriculum;
- ✓ enable students to reach and exceed their potential in reading, writing, speaking and listening.;
- ✓ provide additional provision (interventions) for students who do not reach the minimum national expectations at KS3;
- ✓ provide additional support strategies (interventions) for EAL, SEN students and those eligible for PP funding;
- ✓ develop an awareness on the part of all staff and students that literacy is the key for all teaching and learning, with a clear link to success in public examinations;
- ✓ embed literacy across the whole school curriculum using a range of resources;
- ✓ continue to raise levels of literacy to improve learning and raise standards across the whole school;
- ✓ celebrate literacy success and progress.

6.4 Practical strategies

Literacy and Learning will focus on four areas:

- Learning through talk
- Reading and Learning from text
- Learning through writing
- Enjoyment through writing

These main areas can be sub-categorised as:

6.4.1 Learning through talk/Speaking and Listening

- Using talk to clarify and present ideas
- Active listening to understand
- Talking and thinking together

Talk is our main means of communication in everyday life and is fundamental to the development of understanding.

We want our students to develop increasing confidence and competence in Speaking and Listening so that they are able to:

- ✓ clarify and present their ideas and explain and develop their thinking;
- ✓ develop their ability to listen actively and respond sensitively and appropriately;
- ✓ adapt their speech to suit a wide range of circumstances, including paired and group discussion and speaking to a larger audience;
- ✓ use varied and specialised vocabulary, including subject specific vocabulary;
- ✓ speak for a range of purposes e.g. to narrate, to analyse, to explain, to reflect and evaluate;
- ✓ recall the main points of a presentation, reflecting on what has been heard to ask searching questions, make comments or challenge the views expressed;
- ✓ identify and report the main points emerging from discussion;
- ✓ provide an explanation or commentary which links words with actions or images;
- ✓ use talk to question, hypothesise, speculate, evaluate, solve problems and develop thinking about complex issues and ideas;
- ✓ use standard English to explain, explore or justify ideas
- ✓ Identify the underlying themes, implications and issues raised by a talk, reading or programme;
- ✓ discuss and evaluate conflicting evidence to arrive at a considered personal viewpoint.

In order to achieve this, our teaching plans will include specific reference to purposeful student Speaking and Listening. This involves, as appropriate:

- ✓ developing materials for cross-curricular challenge days, which will provide students with opportunities to engage in purposeful talk, in both formal and informal situations;
- ✓ structuring tasks in lessons so that students know the purpose for their listening, providing note-taking frames as appropriate;
- ✓ planning carefully the size and organisation of groups, matching these to the purpose of the activity, ability of the students and the desired learning outcomes;
- ✓ model effective examples of successful speaking and listening for students;
- ✓ evaluate speaking and listening activities through teacher and AFL;
- ✓ give students the opportunity to deliver formal Speaking and Listening presentations, in all subjects and, when appropriate, use these presentations as part of the formal assessment process.

The role of the teacher is to raise student awareness of the strategies and skills involved when developing their Speaking and Listening skills.

6.4.2 Reading and Learning from text:

- Developing research and study skills
- Reading for meaning
- Understanding how texts work

We want our students to enjoy reading, to be able to use their reading to help them to learn and to develop increasing confidence and competence in reading so that they are able to:

- ✓ read fluently, accurately and with understanding;
- ✓ become independent and critical readers who make informed and appropriate choices;
- ✓ select information from a wide range of texts and sources including print, media and ICT and to evaluate those sources;
- ✓ apply techniques such as skimming, scanning and text-marking effectively in order to research and appraise texts

We will use available data on students' reading abilities in order to make informed choices about appropriate texts and to plan appropriate support for students in order that they may successfully access texts. Reading assessments are an integral part of the English Department assessment process. The SEN Department also assesses students throughout Key Stage 3 in order to ascertain what the individual student's reading age is. The reading ages are then distributed to staff so that staff can use this information to determine appropriate texts for the reading age range of a particular class.

6.4.3 Learning through writing:

- Using writing as a tool for thought
- Structuring and organising writing
- Developing clear and appropriate expression

Many lessons include and depend on written communication. We want our students to develop increasing confidence and competence in writing so that they are able to:

- ✓ write in a widening variety of forms for different purposes e.g. to interpret, evaluate, explain, analyse and explore;
- ✓ develop ideas and communicate meaning to a reader using wide-ranging and technical vocabulary and effective style, organizing and structuring sentences grammatically and whole texts coherently;
- ✓ present their writing clearly using accurate punctuation, correct spelling and legible handwriting;
- ✓ the purpose and intended audience for each piece of writing;
- ✓ how pre-structured writing (writing frames) is used and gradually withdrawn as appropriate;
- ✓ the vocabulary related to specialist subjects and the use of helpful spelling strategies;
- ✓ the relevant ways of paragraphing writing and linking paragraphs;
- ✓ how students are helped to develop the ability to synthesise information from different sources.

6.4.4 Enjoying Literacy:

- Reading for pleasure
- Creative writing for pleasure
- Storytelling in all written and oral forms

We want our students to feel a sense of pleasure in reading, writing and speaking so that they develop a life-long love of these skills.

Resources

Holbrook Academy is committed to providing:

- ✓ interactive displays of reading material relevant to the topic or national curriculum subject; each classroom displays subject specific vocabulary which students are encouraged to use regularly;
- ✓ high quality reading material, which is up to date, relevant and balanced in its presentation of ethnicity, culture and gender;
- ✓ dictionaries, glossaries and lists of appropriate subject vocabulary are readily available during lessons, which students are encouraged to use;
- ✓ access to appropriate audio visual equipment;
- ✓ a classroom environment which is conducive to good literacy practice;
- ✓ a dedicated 'Literacy Centre' to act as the hub for activities.

6.5 Whole School literacy

All departments should correct grammatical errors in support of whole school literacy and use the same codes and practices in order that the process becomes familiar to students. The following is not an exclusive list of those used, but forms a good starting point:-

P	punctuation error
C	capital letter needed
Sp	spelling error
✓	student has made a valid point
✓✓	very well done
^	add in a word
//	new paragraph
T	target
	Use a better word
g	Grammar

6.6 Spellings

All teachers should encourage good spelling and teach the spelling of key words for their subject and topic. It is helpful if common errors are pointed out to students, rather than every spelling error corrected as this can be demoralizing. Teachers should use their judgement and knowledge of the student's needs when correcting spelling and setting spellings for learning.

Subject teachers and tutors should encourage students to record spellings and work on them regularly.

Teachers should deliver literacy and spelling activities as directed by the Literacy Co-ordinator.

7.0 Marking

It is expected that students' book be marked in line with the Academy's marking policy. For students that are taught once per week, marking of their work will be expected to be completed once every half term. This means that, 'Exercise books must show some form of assessment on a fortnightly basis'. It is expected that 'Check and Correct' be at the heart of all literacy marking.

8.0 Home Learning

"Homework is not an optional extra, but an essential part of a good education." - *1999 White Paper, Excellence in Schools*

Homework is work that is set to be done outside the timetabled curriculum. It contains an element of independent study in that it is not usually directly supervised by a teacher. It is important in raising student achievement and helps cement learning and develop wider independent learning that is crucial in later stages of education.

8.1 Aims of Home Learning:

Home learning enables students to:

- Consolidate and extend work covered in class or prepare for new learning;
- Access resources not available in the classroom and develop research skills;
- Show progress and understanding;
- Enhance study skills e.g. planning, time management and self-discipline;
- Develop literacy and numeracy skills outside the classroom;
- Take ownership and responsibility for learning and have an opportunity for independent work;
- Gain experience in planning commitments over a period of time.

8.2 How much work will be set?

Because the nature of home learning tasks varies greatly, it is not easy to define precisely how much time students across the age and ability range should spend on each piece of work.

As a broad guide home learning tasks should last for the following times –

Year 7 – 20 minutes minimum

Year 8 – 30 minutes minimum

Year 9 – 40 minutes minimum

Year 10 and 11 – approximately 1 hour

Some home learning tasks will be set as a longer project and demand an extended piece of writing; others may be shorter revision activities. Teachers give clear guidance and deadlines.

8.3 In which subjects will home learning be set?

Most subjects set home learning tasks weekly or fortnightly according to the home learning timetable. Art and music will incorporate project based home learning tasks that will take a minimum of four weeks to complete.

8.4 What forms will home learning take?

Because of the demands of the curriculum and the varied learning skills which students need to develop, home learning takes many different forms. Home learning will not always be a written task. Examples of different types of home learning include:

- Independent learning
- Consolidation of work in class
- Practice - learning by doing
- On-going tasks such as projects and completion of GCSE course work assignments
- Research
- Reading
- Interviews
- Drawing
- Using ICT
- Recording
- Self-evaluation
- Transformation tasks
- Reducing information
- Revision for tests or examinations

8.5 How to record home learning tasks:

All staff setting home learning will be expected to record each task using ShowMyHomework. Students will be expected to record submission dates in their **Student Planner**. This is an ideal way for parents to be kept in the picture regarding the nature, frequency and amount of home learning activities being issued. There is also a facility for parental signatures which provides a visible acknowledgement that parents are supporting their child's learning.

8.6 How will home learning be assessed?

Home learning is assessed using the following grading system:

1	Excellent	Quality of home learning is of a very high standard and shows real independent thinking.
2	Good	The home learning shows many good qualities.
3	Some concerns	The quality of the home learning is satisfactory; although some elements are fine there are a few things missing.
4	Poor	The quality of the home learning is poor and major elements need revisiting.

Failure to complete home learning tasks results in sanctions in line with the Academy's discipline policy. Grades are recorded on ShowMyHomework and monitored by teachers and Subject Leaders. Students may also receive stickers, praise postcards or certificates to celebrate their success with home learning tasks.

8.7 Home Learning - The role of the Student:

- To listen to home learning instructions in class and to ask if they do not understand.
- To copy down instructions for the task and the deadline date into their student planner.
- To ensure that home learning is completed and handed in to meet the deadline.
- To attempt all work to the best of their ability.
- To inform the class teacher of any difficulties.

8.8 Home Learning - The role of the Form Tutor

- To see that home learning is being set and recorded regularly.
- To check that the student planner is being signed by the parent/carer.
- To note and respond to any comments written in student planner by parents/carers.

8.9 Home Learning - The role of the Class Teacher

The class teacher controls the direction of home learning and the nature of tasks undertaken. The teacher will:

- Set home learning according to the timetable.
- Provide the stimulus; ensuring that home learning consolidates classroom learning.
- Give full and comprehensive instructions.
- Set deadlines for completed work and ensure that they are met.
- Mark and return all home learning promptly, recording assessment of home learning on ShowMyHomework.
- Make contact with parents/carers regarding concerns about home learning.

8.10 Home Learning - The role of Parents / Carers

Parents/Carers can assist by:

- Providing a quiet place to work.
- Encouraging a positive approach to home learning by discussing and sharing tasks.
- Offering guidance and assistance without taking away independence.
- Checking the time spent on individual tasks.
- Checking presentation and content of home learning being returned to school.
- Signing the student planner each week.
- Providing the Academy with information about any problems through the student planner or by contacting the Academy directly.
- Encouraging their child to read every day. Studies show that even 20 minutes a day of reading improves educational performance.

8.11 When should home learning be done?

There is no single answer to this question. Children, like adults, are all different and what suits one will not necessarily suit the other. However, it is very important to establish a routine as the basis for a sensible approach to managing home learning tasks. The following pointers are offered on that basis:-

- Plan home learning or study at **regular** times and try to stick to this pattern.
- Several **shorter** sessions on a number of subjects is better than one lengthy stint on a single subject – other than when you have a specific item of work, such as an essay, which requires a fair amount of time.
- Commit yourself to doing your home learning task most nights of the week (ideally Monday to Thursday) but leave parts of the week aside for other activities. Friday night and Saturday should be avoided!
- Make full use of the student planner to schedule work in advance.
- Avoid leaving everything until the last minute.

8.12 Where should children study?

Individual students have their own preferences, but, in general, the following conditions are thought best:-

- In a quiet part of the house, away from distractions such as TV, family pets or even younger brothers/sisters.
- Somewhere warm and well lit.
- On a flat surface, preferably a desk with plenty of room for books, notes, pens, pencils, etc.
- Sometimes students may be expected to research topics using ICT. If students do not have access to computers at home they can access the Academy ICT facilities at break, lunchtime and at the end of the day.