



## LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY

### MISSION STATEMENT

Westfield girls are given the inspiration, knowledge and ambition to live confidently in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We provide a stimulating education relevant to today's ever changing world. We encourage each girl to be a responsible, resilient and independent learner. We give each girl a sense of worth, whatever her individual strengths and qualities, in an aspirational and nurturing environment

### POLICY DEFINITIONS

**Learning** is a permanent change of behaviour arising as a consequence of reflection on meaningful experience. Learning allows greater control over one's own capacity to make choices and decisions for the benefit of oneself and others. Learning challenges and shapes the understanding and beliefs, which underpin our behaviour.

**Teaching** provides opportunities for learners to partake of and share meaningful experiences, encourages reflection upon these and the making of informed choices. Teaching provides access to relevant knowledge and direct experience, challenging belief and providing a systematic structure for thought.

### AIMS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

In line with our mission statement the aims of teaching and learning are:

- To enable all pupils to learn and develop their skills to the best of their ability and to reach their true potential in terms of academic achievement, aesthetic appreciation and spiritual awareness.
- To enable pupils to have respect for themselves and high self-esteem and to give each pupil a sense of their own worth.
- To develop a responsible and independent attitude towards work, towards others and towards their roles in society.
- To develop the knowledge and skills relevant to life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- To foster an understanding and appreciation of the wider global community.

### EFFECTIVE TEACHING

Teachers work towards the school's aims by:

- Making their lessons interesting and stimulating and providing opportunities for pupils to work independently and develop thinking skills.
- Providing lessons which are well prepared, structured and use a variety of teaching styles and learning activities.
- Making aims and objectives explicit to pupils at the beginning of the lesson and involving pupils in their evaluation of learning achievement.
- Maintaining an up to date knowledge of the curriculum they are delivering.
- Offering opportunities for the highest standard of personal achievement by pupils across the ability range.
- Using praise and positive reinforcement to foster self esteem, motivation and confidence.
- By fostering mutual respect, both pupil to pupil and teacher to pupil.
- Using both formative and summative assessment to evaluate pupils' progress and to inform future teaching plans.
- Making use of links with parents, the wider community and links through Round Square, to enhance teaching and learning where appropriate and relevant.

- Ensuring that the environment in which teachers and pupils are working is safe, comfortable and stimulating.
- Encouraging and supporting pupils to develop an interest in the subject outside of the classroom.

## **EFFECTIVE LEARNING**

Where learning is effective and meets the School's aims pupils:

- Develop over time the ability to work autonomously and to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Help each other and work collaboratively as well as independently.
- Make full use of all the opportunities with which they are presented to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Demonstrate, in assessments and tests; that they are performing to the best of their ability.
- Arrive on time to lessons, appropriately equipped.
- Enjoy lessons and respond positively to the challenges set.

### **All planning is based on the following:**

- learning for its own sake;
- curriculum richness and balance;
- the creation of a vibrant and safe teaching and learning environment;
- a balance between long-term in-depth study and light-touch topics;
- a balance between individual, group and whole-class study, and between discussion, short exercises and longer project work;
- giving opportunities which address all individual learning styles;
- collaborative working practices;
- critical analysis and evaluation of teaching;
- critical analysis and evaluation of learning based on observation and assessment;
- critical evaluation of all new initiatives;
- improvement to the pupils' experiences and attainment;
- opportunity for reflection and the use of new skills and understanding in new situations;
- feedback from learning to planning;
- feedback to pupils in the form of targets.

### **Attitudes we wish to promote in children include:**

- enthusiasm for and enjoyment of learning;
- perseverance and resilience;
- curiosity and resourcefulness;
- responsibility;
- optimism;
- co-operation and collaboration;
- being prepared to listen and debate;
- the ability to reason and reflect;
- an understanding that mistakes are learning opportunities;
- self-respect, honesty, integrity and trust;
- understanding, empathy, courtesy and compassion;
- confidence.

### **We believe that good teaching occurs when teachers:**

- create a healthy learning environment in which the child can question safely, be faced with challenge suitable to her needs and understand the purpose of her learning;
- focus on and plan for beneficial learning outcomes;
- actively engage and involve the children;
- utilise a structured lesson model which the children understand;
- build in suitable rest periods and physical activity;

- use a variety of methods for grouping, presentation, discussion and consolidation of learning;
- offer a multi-sensory approach to learning;
- gradually build up meaningful challenge;
- share with the children an understanding of the desired learning outcomes and the processes by which they learn;
- build from the learning already there;
- connect learning to the world beyond the classroom;
- share an understanding of how to improve with the child through frequent and clear feedback.

**To encourage good teaching and learning the school will:**

- encourage the use of VAK learning;
- build Thinking Skills, Information Skills and ICT into subject planning;
- engage in a system of peer observation to encourage the sharing of ideas and good practice;
- endeavour to provide appropriate resources for learning within and without the classroom;
- communicate with parents about their children's learning and encourage them to play an active part;
- encourage continuing professional development of staff.

*This document should be read in conjunction with individual departmental policies on teaching and learning.*

Updated and reviewed September 2016