



WELLINGTON COLLEGE BELFAST

## **Learning and Teaching Policy**

Reviewed by The Board of Governors May 2019

## Principles

Learning and Teaching is the core business within Wellington College. Excellent learning and teaching is one of our key priorities and is underpinned by our school vision and values, whereby we are committed to ensuring we have the highest expectations of - and aspirations for - every young person. We continually strive to offer excellent learning experiences in a caring and nurturing environment, where success is celebrated and underperformance challenged.

Our vision is for all of our pupils, regardless of background and circumstance, to make outstanding progress, to achieve grades which will provide opportunities in the future and to become equipped with transferable skills for life beyond school. We want our pupils to be confident and independent learners; to be resilient and to value effort; to be creative thinkers; to understand that sometimes failure is an essential part of the learning process and to recognise that developing a positive, 'can do' attitude will help them to set and achieve aspirational goals.

Learning and Teaching at WCB has been guided by evidence-based research. All members of the College Community follow our Learning and Teaching Model (Appendix A). The Learning and Teaching Policy is set within the context of the Education (NI) Order of 2006 and takes account of 'Every School a Good School,' 'Together Towards Improvement' and 'Learning Leaders'. Our Learning and Teaching Policy sits alongside our **Curriculum and Assessment Policy** and our **Positive Behaviour Policy**.

## College aims for Learning and Teaching

Wellington College Belfast seeks to provide an environment, both inside and beyond the classroom, in which pupils, staff and parents are committed to excellence and where:

- learners have access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which will offer coherent pathways to success
- learners can make informed and appropriate choices at the end of KS3, KS4 and KS5
- learners will develop lively, enquiring minds, and an ability to question and argue rationally
- learners will develop personal moral values
- learners will be aspirational, creative, resilient, confident and independent
- learners will fulfil their potential

## Roles and Responsibilities

### The Board of Governors is expected to:

- ensure that the curriculum is broad and balanced, is in line with the NI Curriculum to include relevant guidance and circulars from DE
- employ staff and deploy resources to facilitate the delivery of the curriculum

### The Principal is expected to:

- have in place an agreed Learning and Teaching Policy along with effective practices for its implementation
- advise the Board of Governors on staffing with regard to the delivery of the curriculum.

### The Senior Leadership Team is expected to:

- ensure the processes for developing and monitoring learning and teaching are in place
- ensure a challenging and stimulating curriculum is on offer
- provide prior attainment data for analysis and set targets for school areas of learning and pupils
- monitor and review school progress against these targets
- ensure access to CPD opportunities focused on improving learning and teaching
- plan, monitor and evaluate Teacher Professional Learning in line with the **Learning Leaders** strategy document\*
- develop experimentation and innovation across all areas of learning, teaching and assessment
- lead the processes for sharing and developing good practice
- lead the processes that quality assure learning, teaching and assessment.

### HODs are expected to:

- exemplify the policy in leading their own areas of learning

- ensure appropriate medium and long term plans are in place for all teaching groups, incorporating homework, assessment procedures and guidance on teaching strategies
- ensure that the most appropriate examination syllabuses are used and review these regularly with staff
- lead monitoring of learning, teaching and assessment, including the use of benchmarking data
- lead areas of learning target setting to improve learning, teaching and assessment.
- ensure staff have access to appropriate CPD opportunities
- monitor and review department attainment through examination reviews and departmental self-evaluation framework

\*<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/strategy-document-english.pdf>

#### Classroom Teachers are expected to:

- promote positive relationships with pupils and parents
- show outstanding knowledge and passion for their subject area
- adhere to departmental schemes of work for lesson content and progression
- give meaningful homework
- challenge pupils and have high expectations of their performance, reflected in appropriate differentiated, planned, learning outcomes
- deliver and endeavour to improve the use of the functional skills of Communication, Using Maths and ICT in their curriculum area
- clarify learning outcomes and success criteria at the beginning of lessons and tasks
- encourage pupils to think and do for themselves through creative tasks, problem-solving, investigation and personal research
- provide stimulating and suitable resources for learning
- use a variety of appropriate assessment processes and tools to monitor pupils' learning including; teachers' observations, discussion with pupils, marking, written tests and peer and self-assessment

- mark pupils' work in line with our feedback policy, recording and reporting policies to highlight strengths and areas for improvement
- engage in the target setting process to bring about pupil improvement
- know their impact – evaluate the effect they are having on students' learning and adjust teaching accordingly

**Students are expected to adhere to our *Positive Behaviour Policy* and be:**

- **Ready** to learn
- **Responsible** in their attitude to their studies
- **Respectful** of their teachers and peers within the learning environment

**The Learning Environment:**

In order that students achieve as learners to their full potential, their learning must take place in an appropriate environment. Such an environment is characterised by:

- A welcoming atmosphere, positive relationships between teachers and students and between students and students in a purposeful, well organised classroom that engages, stimulates and inspires.
- A high level of enthusiasm for learning from the teacher transferred to students within an atmosphere of mutual respect based on our school ethos and values.
- Clean, well resourced, tidy, safe, and litter free classrooms and corridors.
- Consistent and fair implementation of all school policies and expectations to enable pupils to take responsibility for their learning.
- High quality, stimulating resources, differentiated where appropriate, and a range of learning activities to stimulate, engage and challenge learners including the use of ICT to enhance learning.
- Classroom displays which inspire pupils

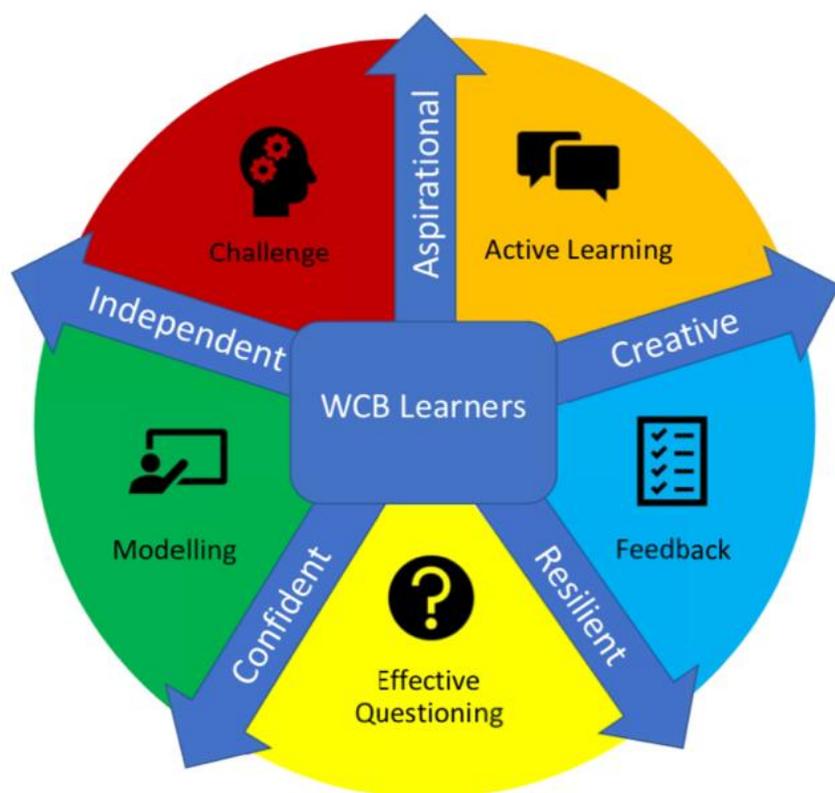
## Appendix A

### The WCB Learning and Teaching Model

#### **What makes great teaching?**

1. (Pedagogical) content knowledge. The most effective teachers have deep knowledge of the subjects they teach. As well as a strong understanding of the material being taught, teachers must also understand the ways students think about the content, be able to evaluate the thinking behind students' own methods, and identify students' common misconceptions.
2. Quality of instruction. Includes elements such as *effective questioning* and *use of assessment* by teachers. Specific practices, like *reviewing previous learning*, *providing model responses* for students, *giving adequate time for practice to embed skills* securely and progressively introducing new learning (*scaffolding*) are also elements of high quality instruction.

**The Sutton Trust: 2014**



The WCB Learning and Teaching model is based around five core evidence-based principles:

1. **Active Learning**
2. **Feedback**
3. **Effective Questioning**
4. **Challenge**
5. **Modelling**

As a result of the implementation of this model, WCB Learners should be **aspirational, creative, resilient, confident and independent.**

## Implementing the Learning and Teaching Model

Teachers should use the following guidance in ensuring that the WCB Learning and Teaching Model is implemented in all lessons:



**Active Learning:** *Let's not confuse the delivery of content with its arrival. Or good explaining with good learning. ...it is perhaps no surprise that students only get good at doing it .... by doing it.* **Geoff Petty**

- Integrate the following strategies into lessons: Each one teach one; Carousel; Jigsaw; Priority Pyramid; Snowballing; Think, Pair, Share; Hot-Seating; Ideas Funnel; Card Ranking.
- The teacher should act as a facilitator, instructor, consultant, commentator.
- Promote a “thinking” classroom through the integration of Pupil Talk.
- Use a variety of Talking and Listening (Literacy) approaches: group work; presentations; role play.
- Prepare effectively: think about classroom environment; SEN pupils; use of classroom assistants.
- Give pupils the tools they need, including phrase banks.



**Feedback:** *“Feedback should cause thinking. It should be focused; it should relate to the learning goals that have been shared with the students; and it should be more work for the recipient than the donor. Indeed, the whole purpose of feedback should be to increase the extent to which students are owners of their own learning.”* **Dylan Wiliam**

- The quality of dialogue in feedback is very important; oral feedback can be more effective than written.
- Track the learning – refer to past work.
- Give specific feedback; avoid vague, meaningless comments.
- Feed forward, with a focus on next steps.
- Guide the learner, encouraging learners to think things through themselves.
- Refer to an excellent example.
- Use lesson time to review work in light of feedback; learners should be given time to reflect on advice and guidance received.



**Effective Questioning:** *“It's clear a teacher is mastering their craft when they hold the reins of lucid discussion that probes, engages, activates, challenges, connects.....”* **Andy Day**

- Ensure that examples of effective questions are planned for and included in schemes of work.
- Use Bloom's Taxonomy to ensure that you are asking questions which demand more than recall of knowledge and a demonstration of understanding.

- Share key questions at the start of a lesson – a different way of sharing learning objectives: ‘These are the questions we will be trying to answer in this lesson.’
- Use open questions and utilise “Pose, Pause, Pounce, Bounce.”
- Try the QFT: Question Formulation Technique to get students to create their own questions.



**Challenge:** *“What we have to do is to create classrooms which are inclusive, where the level of cognitive demand is high, and where participation is obligatory.”* **Dylan William**

- Anchor in Challenge.
- Set clear success criteria.
- Give individual, constructive feedback.
- Make time for pupil talk about their learning.
- Ask good questions.
- Have high expectations.
- Give pupils high levels of support.
- Encourage a Growth Mindset.
- Aim for an Inclusive Pedagogy where all pupils are challenged.



**Modelling:** *“It sets a benchmark for excellence...it makes abstract success criteria concrete...it excavates the thought processes of experts.”* **Allison and Tharby**

- Make explicit what it is you are going to be modelling and why it is important.
- Show pupils how to do each step – whether this by physically doing it, or getting students to do it with you; *Flipped Classroom* can be effective here.
- Question pupils about why they are doing it that way, so they develop an understanding of the ‘why’ as well as the ‘what’.
- Point out common mistakes and misconceptions – and how to avoid these.
- Use examples of excellent work – to deconstruct, in order to demonstrate the high standards that the students should be aiming for.
- Model your own thinking to help pupils develop their metacognitive skills.

## Appendix B

### Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Wellington College encourages a culture of self-evaluation throughout all aspects of College life. This is very evident in the monitoring, evaluation and review of Learning and Teaching in the College and supported by the WCB Self-Evaluation Framework. The following methods are utilised throughout the year:

