

# Notley High School & Braintree Sixth Form

## Teaching and Learning Policy

### Teaching and Learning Committee

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<b>Designated Postholder:</b>	Mrs Rachel Kelly, Deputy Headteacher

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# Teaching and Learning: why we exist as a school

## Introduction

The Teaching and Learning Policy is the key document in the school as it underpins all our work across Notley High School & Braintree Sixth Form. It reflects the importance we place on teaching, learning, assessment and achievement, focusing on the needs of students who are at the core of everything we do. It reminds us of the reasons for the existence of our school and the criteria by which we are judged. Our policy reflects the principles developed in our Teaching & Learning Tree. We are an International Baccalaureate 'World School' and aim to develop our students to think critically and encourage them to consider both their local and international environments in which they live.

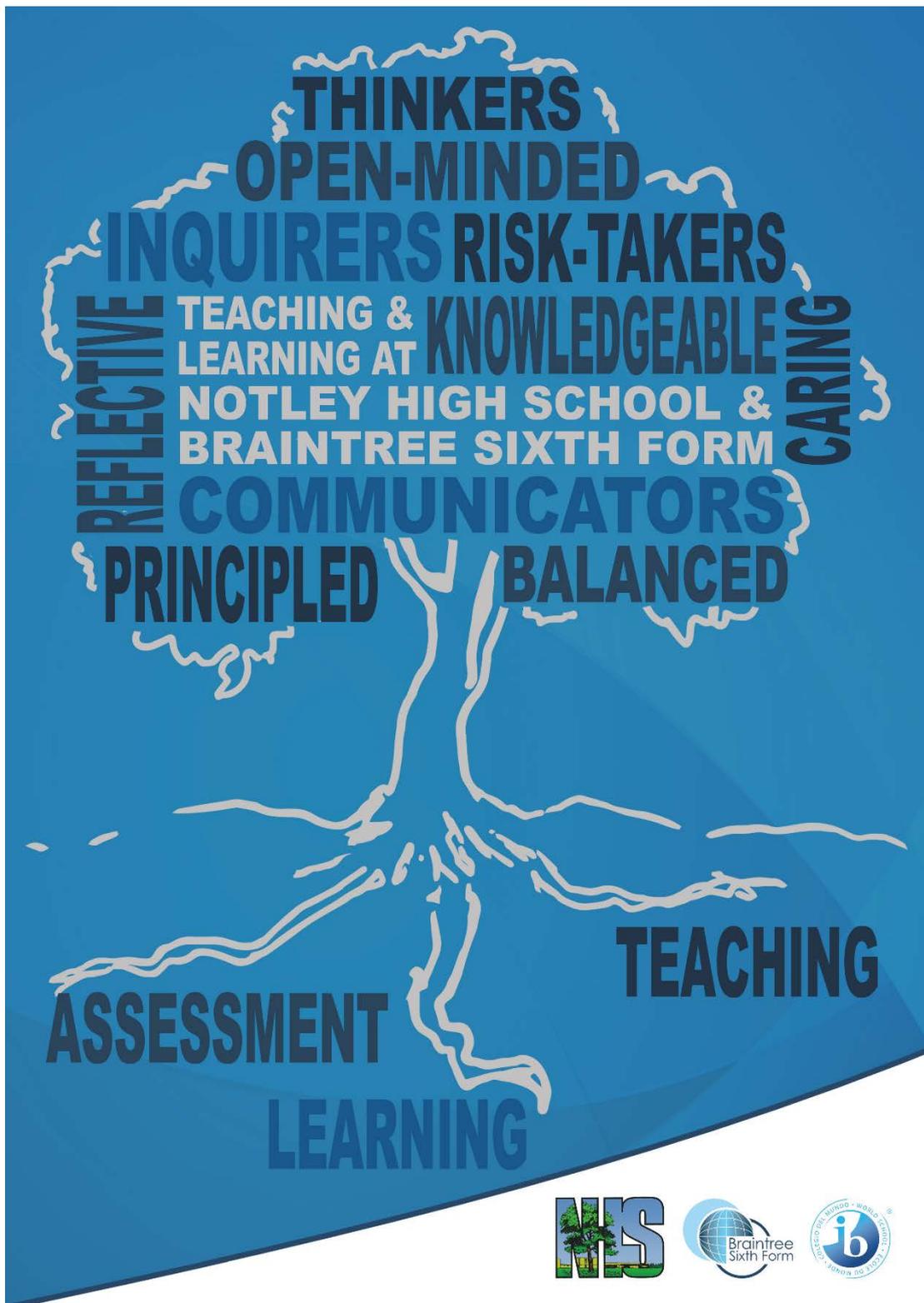
We take pride in our work in enabling students of all abilities from age 11-19 to succeed. This success is not accidental but derives from the high quality of all staff in the school and our commitment to provide the very best for our students.

## Core Principles

- Educate and nurture the whole person to develop independence and confidence for life;
- Provide a safe respectful and friendly environment;
- Empower all members of our learning community to achieve their full potential;
- Respect and value the contribution of all individuals in our learning community;
- Nurture links with, and fully engage, the wider community;
- Enhance, change through co-operation, participation and a focus on future possibilities;
- Well-ordered classrooms will contribute to students taking responsibility for their own learning.

## Teaching and Learning: Key Principles

- Students should be taught how to learn and how to reflect and improve on their learning;
- Learning objectives must be shared and reviewed;
- Clear structured lessons promote learning;
- Learning activities should be varied, purposeful and personalised to meet the needs of all students;
- Achievement must be recognised and rewarded;
- All students are capable of achievement. Identifying and challenging underachievement is the responsibility of all teachers and learning mentors (LMs). High expectations are not enough on their own; action is needed to ensure they are met, including high quality home learning;
- Teachers must ensure a purposeful learning environment is maintained;
- Cover work must be set to ensure purposeful learning is maintained in the teacher's absence.



Teaching, learning and assessment are shown as the 'roots of the tree' and the 'leaves' represent the attitudes and attributes that we are striving for our students to develop as a result of excellent teaching and learning whilst at Notley High School & Braintree Sixth Form.

# The Leaves of the Teaching & Learning Tree

## Attitudes and attributes we are striving for our students to develop – taken from the IB Learner Profile

<p><b>Inquirers</b></p> <p>We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.</p>	<p><b>Open-minded</b></p> <p>We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.</p>
<p><b>Knowledgeable</b></p> <p>We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.</p>	<p><b>Caring</b></p> <p>We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.</p>
<p><b>Thinkers</b></p> <p>We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.</p>	<p><b>Risk-takers</b></p> <p>We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and co-operatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of</p>
<p><b>Communicators</b></p> <p>We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.</p>	<p><b>Balanced</b></p> <p>We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives – intellectual, physical, and emotional – to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognise our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.</p>
<p><b>Principled</b></p> <p>We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.</p>	<p><b>Reflective</b></p> <p>We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.</p>

## Marking and Assessment: Key Principles

- Marking and assessment should celebrate student achievement and show how they can improve while including opportunities for students to act upon teacher guidance (feedforward);
- Marking and assessment must be used as a tool for student progression.

Each of these areas are explored in detail in the next section of this policy.

The effective assessment and marking of work are fundamental to successful teaching and learning. All assessment information should be used formatively. The aim of assessment is to give students clear guidance about how to progress in their learning. Students must be told of the assessment criteria for both class work and home learning tasks and be given opportunities to respond to formative feedback. Further guidance is provided in the whole school Assessment, Marking & Reporting Policy. All faculties have a Marking and Assessment Policy which refers to specific procedures and practices for those subjects.

### **Marking and assessment should celebrate student achievement and show how they can improve while including opportunities for students to act upon teacher guidance (feedforward).**

- i. All class work or home learning that is formally assessed, according to department policy, must receive formative comments. This will usually be in writing. When formative feedback is given verbally by the teacher, it may be appropriate for it to be recorded by students in exercise books or files and the teacher could record this in their mark book/planner. Students should be informed about what they have done well and how to progress in their learning (feedback and feedforward);
- ii. A formative comment must:
  - Be individual to meet the student's learning needs;
  - Focus on two areas of success, and one or two specific targets for improvement – this is two stars and a wish;
  - Be personal by using the student's first name;
  - Refer to the mark scheme where relevant;
  - Be prompt, and give back to the students as soon as possible and within three school weeks;
- iii. Opportunities must be given for students to act upon the guidance. This could be done through class or home learning, for example:
  - A starter or a plenary activity;
  - Students set their own targets by themselves, with the help of peers/teacher;
  - Discussion with the student;
  - A peer assessment activity;
  - Peer teaching;

- Re-drafting pieces of work;
  - Students keep guidelines on how to approach a particular question;
- iv. Peer and/or self-assessment should take place frequently and at least once a term in every subject area. The aim of self-assessment is to enable students to be actively involved in the assessment process and give them ownership of their learning and therefore encourage independent learning;

### **Marking and assessment must be used as a tool for student progression**

#### Marking

- i. Students' work should be regularly marked for attainment. As a minimum at KS3 there should be one piece of work awarded a grade per half term. At KS4 there should be two graded pieces of work per half term using the criteria and standards given by the appropriate awarding bodies. At KS5 there should be a range of assessment tasks each half term using the criteria and standards given by the appropriate awarding bodies. Where faculties or subject groups set larger project work this could be broken down into smaller stages for grading. These grades should be recorded by the subject teacher and student.

#### Cross Year Assessment Tasks

- i. There must be a minimum of one cross year assessment task per term in every subject area, differentiated where necessary according to the students' needs. A record of progress in each unit should be kept during the term. These tasks can be set for class work or home learning. Departments should record and compare performance in cross year assessments. These will be more frequent in some subject areas and key stages, as per department policy.
- ii. The task must be common across comparable groups and the marking criteria clearly set beforehand and shared with the students. Grades should be shared with students and action taken to maximise student potential.
- iii. As a result of assessment outcomes, departments should plan and deliver appropriate intervention targeted at underachievement.
- iv. There are many types of cross year assessment task including:
- An extended piece of written work;
  - An investigation/project;
  - A practical task;
  - Whole class presentations, sometimes using ICT;
  - An oral or aural activity;
  - A mid topic test;
  - An end of unit test;

- End of key stage test;
- The end of year examination.

#### Cross Year Assessment – Achievement Grades

- i. At KS3, it is the responsibility of faculties to ensure that the full range of grades is used for every cross year assessment task. Exceptional performances should also be highlighted where appropriate;
- ii. At KS4 and KS5, grades should be awarded according to examination board criteria;
- iii. Each department must have a clear rationale regarding the awarding of grades within each subject area across the entire year group for all key stages;
- iv. These grades should be collated and recorded centrally and departments must carry out regular moderation;
- v. Each department must have a clear rationale for awarding teacher assessed grades at the end of each academic year;
- vi. Achievement grades should not be used to mark all student work. It is essential that staff record grades for all assessed class work and home learning in their mark books as this will allow individual progress to be monitored;
- vii. Target grades must be recorded in teachers' mark books, students' planners and student exercise books/folders. These should be used to inform discussion and intervention where necessary;
- viii. With past examination assessments, grades should be given. The relevant assessment criteria and grade boundaries should be used when assessing these tasks;
- ix. Folders and/or electronic notes must be checked for accuracy and content at least once a half-term. There must be visible evidence that notes have been checked, for example, a teacher's signature in folders. A record of this must be made in the teacher's mark book. This is particularly relevant at KS5;
- x. For certain activities, it is appropriate to award a numerical mark;
- xi. Effort grades should not be used to mark students' work.

## **Inclusion**

**Every student at Notley High School & Braintree Sixth Form has the right to receive the highest quality education. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that all their educational needs are met. Ensuring inclusion involves:**

- Setting suitable learning challenges that meet the needs of all students;
- Responding to students' diverse learning needs;
- Working to overcome potential barriers to learning;
- Setting parameters that ensure students feel safe and valued in their environment whether in a pastoral or academic sense, inside or outside the classroom.

**Different groups of students have specific needs, which the school supports in a number of ways:**

Disadvantaged Students (Pupil Premium)

- All disadvantaged students are identified and their progress is the responsibility of each teacher;
- Their progress is monitored by middle leaders and SLT;
- There is clear information about the impact of intervention work with disadvantaged students on the school's website.

SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disabilities)

- Information about individual students is provided by the SENCO. It is important that teachers support the development of the student by implementing these strategies and helping the student work towards meeting their targets;
- In order to track the progress being made by SEND students, staff will be asked to provide information towards their reviews. When requested, this information must be returned promptly so that an effective review can take place. Learning Mentors also provide vital information towards student reviews;
- Discussion should also take place with the student regarding how the student likes to be supported and which types of resources/measures can help them.

Learning Mentors (LMs)

- The Learning Support Department has a large team of LMs. Some students have specific hours of support via their Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs); most often this support is used in class but LM support is also used in small group lessons, private study and one to one sessions;
- LMs should work under the direction of the class teacher. There should be discussion about how the LM time is being used in class; this will vary depending on the needs of the target student(s);
- Schemes of learning, lesson plans and resources should be shared with the LM whenever possible;
- Consideration should be given to where students receiving support are seated so that the LM can easily provide effective support.

## EAL (English as an Additional Language)

At Notley High School & Braintree Sixth Form, a very small proportion of our students have experience of a language other than English. For these students, their knowledge of language and their competence in English has a huge impact on their learning.

- The needs of all students with EAL need to be considered and addressed in order for successful learning to take place.

## Able students

- Through their department, each teacher is responsible for ensuring that the needs of able and talented students are met;
- All departments are responsible for preparing departmental, subject specific lists and highlighting able and talented opportunities within the schemes of learning and departmental activities;
- Activities should not simply be more work and not necessarily of the same nature. Able and talented students who are not meeting their potential should be challenged and stretched.

## **Monitoring of Teaching and Learning**

Our teaching and learning will be systematically and regularly monitored using a variety of strategies.

Monitoring strategies will include:

- Faculty reviews;
- Work scrutiny;
- Learning walks;
- Case studies;
- Student observations;
- Informal observations;
- Peer observations;
- Observation trios.

Heads of Faculty and subject teachers are responsible for:

- Leading and monitoring the quality of teaching and learning within their curriculum area;
- Supporting the professional development needs of individual teaching and associate staff members within their curriculum area;
- Liaising with the tutor, Head of House, Student Support Officer, SENCO and parents/carers where necessary.