ST. PHILIP HOWARD
CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY

Pedagogy and Practice Policy 2026 – 2027

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Our policy is founded on the core values of the school's mission:

#TeamSPH – Together on the Journey

Together, we will make the SPH journey: safely, respectfully and with kindness as part of a **united Catholic family.**

God will be at the heart of our journey, supporting us to realise the potential of our **God given talents.**

Our Gospel Values will guide us on our journey, helping us to make **brave choices** along the way.

Respect for all will be at the spirit of our journey and we will **embrace the uniqueness** of everyone we greet.

Inspiration and passion for learning will lead us all to have a **memorable and successful** journey.

We are committed to:

- Giving our students the very best teaching in order to ensure they succeed both spiritually and academically.
- Ensuring our teaching strives to celebrate the spiritual, moral, and cultural dimensions of learning.
- Ensuring we provide the highest standards of learning to ensure we maximise the potential of all of our students.
- Ensuring our teaching will support high standards of behaviour through the highest standards of classroom management in a culture of mutual tolerance, dignity and respect.

2. RATIONALE

Our pedagogy and practice policy has been developed in order to ensure that all teachers are aware of what constitutes good practice. It will allow the school to sustain its high standards of achievement and ensures that teachers and leaders can target areas for improvement. There are 5 areas of the policy including:

- **Teaching and learning**
- **Assessment and Progress**
- **Literacy across the curriculum**
- **Marking for Learning and Exercise Books**
- **Quality Assurance and Monitoring for Achievement (MfA)**

The procedures and policies relating to behaviour for learning also support the development of teaching and learning quality, and therefore run alongside these policies.

AIMS:

- To inform staff of expected good practice when planning effective lessons.
- To improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- To ensure all pupils make good or better progress within lessons.

Lessons should not be disrupted with visits or messages from other staff or pupils.

3. IMPLEMENTATION: TEACHING AND LEARNING

The methods used in teaching should be those considered by the teacher to be the most appropriate for achieving the learning objectives and success criteria, and ensuring that all pupils make good or better progress. All individuals are unique and valued, and we must provide opportunities for all to develop their full potential both academically and spiritually. The school is a dynamic learning community to which all pupils and staff bring their own experience and knowledge. The participation of pupils, therefore, is essential if the teaching and learning process is to be successful. This requires high expectations from the teacher, and the use of a range of teaching methods, styles and strategies that will focus on learning. Effective teaching and learning is the key to sustained school improvement. People assimilate information in different ways and therefore tasks should be tailored in order to ensure pupils with different learning styles make good or better progress.

Effective Teaching and learning takes place when:

- Pupils are welcomed into a place of learning where they are interested, stimulated and demonstrate a love of learning and intellectual curiosity.
- It is carried out in an atmosphere of good relationships between teacher and pupils and between pupils, in a context of firm and consistent discipline which allows learning to take place.
- There is an environment which demonstrates high standards of literacy and the correct use of English as well as language appropriate for the reading age of the pupil.
- Pupils are able to build on their capabilities and prior knowledge.
- Pupils feel safe and secure in a stimulating environment, rooted in mutual respect which is conducive to learning.
- Goals are set that enable pupils of all backgrounds, abilities and dispositions to be stretched and challenged and content is appropriate to the age, ability and stage development of the pupils.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils.
- Pupils are aware of their current attainment and provided with regular immediate feedback and shown how to use formative and summative assessment to make sustained progress.
- Pupils are encouraged to reflect on the progress they have made and their emerging needs, taking increasing responsibility for their own learning to become independent learners.
- The lesson is carried out at an appropriate pace and all time is used effectively.
- Learning is differentiated appropriately to suit specific learning needs.
- Pupils are aware of final grading assessment procedures, specifications and the standard they must work towards.
- Pupils are actively engaged in the lesson, having opportunities to assess evidence, make decisions, negotiate, listen, solve problems and think about what they are learning and how to improve their work.
- Planning demonstrates secure subject knowledge and is linked to assessment criteria or exam syllabi.
- Prior assessment is used to inform planning.
- Pupils are encouraged to take a responsible and conscientious attitude to their own work and study.
- Objectives and assessment criteria are clearly defined and shared with the pupils, informing them clearly about what they are doing, why they are doing it, and the way in which they can judge their work.
- A range of teaching styles are deployed giving pupils the opportunity to develop higher order thinking skills.
- There are numerous instances within the lesson that facilitate the assessment of pupil progress.
- Student questioning, reflection and discussion are encouraged.
- Students have opportunities to transfer skills, knowledge and understanding to other contexts.

- Meaningful homework is set (in planners and on the VLE) which consolidates and extends knowledge and understanding.

We will judge the quality of teaching and learning using the Ofsted lesson observation grading judgements, alongside teacher standards through a comprehensive Performance Management and Appraisal Policy (see separate document).

4. THE LEARNING JOURNEY

This section of the policy reflects the academy's minimum expectations regarding planning, preparation, lesson structure and assessment for learning.

Before the lesson

Planning and preparation

- Lessons are planned with clear aims and objectives, structure and challenge for all students.
- Objectives are clearly linked to departmental long- and medium-term plans which are periodically reviewed. Objectives are derived from the relevant specification or programme of study.
- Planning allows for a variety of learning styles and provides opportunities for developing a wide range of skills.
- Teachers make use of all available information, both statistical and personal, to inform their teaching and learning and ensure it maximises pupil progress.
- Lessons are planned to build on prior learning and ensure continuity and progression.
- Opportunities for developing literacy, numeracy, ICT skills, British Values, SMSC, as well as cross-curricular elements, are integrated into lesson plans wherever possible.
- Planning makes provision for the effective use of Teaching Assistants and other adults as appropriate.
- Appropriate and stimulating resources are organised prior to the lesson.
- Assessment for learning opportunities should be planned in advance.
- Opportunities for Directed Improvement and Reflection Time (DIRT) should be regularly planned for.

Lesson Structure

This framework is expected to provide a basic structure for all lessons. It is, however, recognised that it may be adapted to suit the objectives of a particular lesson or sequence of lessons.

Lessons should focus on the key features of The SPH Learning Journey.

Start of the Lesson:

- The start of the lesson should begin with a "Do It Now" in order to engage learning from the off.
- There are clear learning objectives, with appropriate challenge.
- The learning objectives and success criteria are shared with students, in the context of prior learning, to ensure students understand what they are doing and why. Students must engage with the learning objectives to achieve this fully.
- The success criteria by which the learning will be evaluated and made explicit.

Lesson Development:

The teacher should strive to:

Ensure that learning is focused on the progress of the students.

- Manage behaviour in accordance with the Behaviour Management policy.
- Present lessons with clarity, enthusiasm and pace.
- Make learning active by providing tasks which enable students to understand meaning, construct knowledge and develop understanding and skills.
- Provide opportunities for independent learning and avoid times where students are completing tasks independently but not actively learning.
- Model activities and processes, making their thinking and decision-making explicit to students.
- Provide or describe exemplar work, where appropriate, so that students are aware of the sophistication of response expected.

- Provide appropriate levels of scaffolding to support students' learning and differentiate according to the range of ability in the class.
- Use a variety of questioning techniques to probe and develop students' understanding and incorporate "thinking time".
- Provide opportunities through 'interruption slides' for students to constantly revisit knowledge learnt previously in the course. These 'interruption slide' activities should be brief and should focus on recalling information. They can have associated links to learning, or be completely independent from the lesson context.
- Encourage on-task student talk where appropriate.
- Promote active listening, inviting a range of different responses and build in time for reflection.
- Give constructive, positive feedback on work in progress.
- Provide opportunities for success for every student and seek frequent opportunities for genuine praise.
- Provide opportunities for progression which increase the level of conceptual challenge, the depth of understanding and the breadth of application of skills and be able to demonstrate progress to students and to observers.
- Provide opportunities for extended pieces of writing in order to develop 'writing stamina'.
- Demonstrate flexibility in their approach and be prepared to deviate from the lesson plan where appropriate.
- Provide frequent opportunities for informal and formal, summative and formative assessment and feedback using a variety of assessment methods including peer- and self-assessment. Provide pre-public examinations where departments have the opportunity to complete assessments three times a year.
- Set a variety of homework tasks to deepen, extend, or initiate learning.
- Provide opportunities for students to learn and practise communication, literacy and numeracy skills and model these skills effectively.

Students should:

- Work effectively and purposefully in a range of contexts.
- Come fully equipped and prepared to maximise the learning opportunity.
- Be prepared to share their learning and ideas in an atmosphere of trust and respect.
- Ask questions, where appropriate, of each other and the teacher.
- Support one another, working collaboratively, recognising that the contributions of all are valid.
- Undertake self-assessment or peer-assessment with some confidence, becoming increasingly able to apply the criteria for success and to set appropriate targets for improvement.
- Have resilience to tackle problems independently before seeking help from the teacher.
- Know where to go for help, when required, and recognise that further progress can always be made.
- Be able to select appropriate learning resources to help develop their own learning.
- Work with increasing independence, developing the skills to become life-long learners.
- Make increasing use of ICT to develop their learning, accessing a wide variety of sources and using appropriate methods to present their work.
- Develop an understanding of their own preferred learning style.

End of the Lesson

- The teacher creates the time to review learning objectives and success criteria and clearly demonstrates where progress can be made.
- Students have the opportunity to identify and demonstrate their own progress and set themselves appropriate targets.
- Students receive supportive feedback from the teacher or their peers where appropriate.
- Opportunities are provided to celebrate success.
- The end of the lesson and dismissal are prompt and orderly, allowing for efficient transition between lessons.