

Teaching and Learning Policy

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Assessment and Marking Policy, Learning Support Policy, Curriculum Policy and Behaviour Policy, and the teacher generic 'job descriptions'.

Abstract

Teaching and Learning at Southbank International has, at its heart, the IB Learner Profile, the purpose of which is to enable all students to become:

- Inquirers: developing curiosity, independence in learning and actively relishing and sustaining a love of learning
- Knowledgeable: exploring concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance across a broad and balanced range of disciplines
- Thinkers: exercising initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively, making reasoned, ethical decisions
- Communicators: understanding and expressing ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication; working effectively and willingly in collaboration with others
- Principled: acting with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for others; taking responsibility for their own actions and consequences
- Open-minded: undertaking and appreciating their own cultures and being open minded to perspectives, values and traditions of others
- Caring: showing empathy compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others, with a personal commitment to service to make a difference to the lives of others and the environment
- Risk Takers: approaching uncertainty of new situations with courage and forethought, showing independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies; demonstrating courage and strength when defending their ideas
- Balanced: understanding the importance of a balance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and for others
- Reflective: giving thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience; ability to understand and assess their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

The purpose of this policy is to secure the highest levels of achievement by ensuring that effective learning takes place in the classroom and beyond.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all teaching staff to provide the highest quality teaching to Southbank students. It is the responsibility of the Principal or Head of Faculty/Head of Department/Head of Schools to monitor the quality of teaching and learning within their teams and to offer support where it is needed.

The SLT is responsible for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning across the school and to identify where development is needed.

The Southbank staff appraisal system is in place to ensure that teaching staff aspire to and maintain the highest standards of teaching and learning (see section K) as well as to offer guidance for professional improvement and development.

Expectations

Southbank has a set of shared principles and guidelines for students and staff, to enable a productive and collaborative learning environment in the School:

Expectations of Students

- Students are expected to take responsibility for their own learning and strive to become independent, life-long learners
- Students should expect advice and guidance from their teachers
- Students are expected to contribute to activities and learning in lessons with enthusiasm, effort and a positive approach
- Students are expected to be organised and to arrive for lessons on time (as far as the logistics of the campus permit), with the correct equipment for their learning activities
- Students must conduct themselves in such a way that allows themselves and others to learn, including listening to others and working collaboratively and supportively with their peers
- Students should meet deadlines and hand work in on time. When this is not possible, they should communicate this to the teacher and be prepared to negotiate a deadline which is mutually acceptable, or be aware of the possible consequences of repeated failure to meet deadlines
- Students are encouraged to be polite, open-minded and respectful of others.

Expectations of teachers

- That they ensure students make at least good progress
- Teachers have a strong understanding of the principles behind best-practice, effective teaching and learning, and are able to demonstrate these principles in the classroom
- Teachers at Southbank have high expectations of their students and are dedicated to inspire and encourage those they teach
- Teachers listen to students' ideas, involving individuals in their own learning and offering guidance in how to progress
- Teachers encourage students to take risks and model this in their own approach to teaching and learning
- Teachers assess students' work and provide regular feedback (in accordance with the Assessment and Marking Policy)
- Teachers are helpful, approachable, supportive and understanding of their students' needs. All students are treated with dignity, consistency and fairness
- Teachers are positive about their students, enthusiastic about their learning and set the highest expectations in the classroom and beyond
- Teachers are role models and model their behaviour on that which is expected from the students, and show an open mindedness, courtesy and respect towards the students

- Teachers have sound subject knowledge and are enthusiastic about their specialisms.
- Teachers are well organised and well prepared for the delivery of their lessons
- Teachers arrive on time to lessons (campus constraints excepted).

Best practice teaching and learning

Best practice in the classroom is the aspiration for all teachers at Southbank. Effective learning takes place when students know:

- How to make at least good progress
- What they are achieving
- How to learn, including thinking and questioning skills and how they learn best
- How to work independently and collaboratively
- Skills needed to develop eg enquiry, research, analysis and reflection
- Attitudes needed for the classroom and beyond, including mutual respect, interest, responsibility and positive response to challenge.

Good and outstanding lessons

In an outstanding lesson the teaching is exemplary in a significant number of ways. Difficult ideas and/or skills are taught in an inspiring and highly effective way. Learners make exceptional progress and enjoy learning. Teaching is stimulating, enthusiastic and challenging. As a result, learners are engrossed in their work and make very good progress. Teachers know their subject thoroughly and know how to teach it and how students learn. They use assessment very effectively to build on students' previous learning. Classroom relationships and behaviour are very good and students work both independently and collaboratively. Time is always used productively. Tasks and activities are demanding and are well matched to students' needs. Teaching assistants and resources are deployed effectively and form an integral part of the teaching team, reinforcing and supporting learning in a very effective way. The teacher's management of difficult behaviour and moments is intelligent, perceptive and constructive.

In a good lesson, most learners make good progress because of good teaching. Behaviour overall is good and learners are keen to get on with their work in a secure and friendly environment in which they can thrive. The health and safety of the learners are not endangered. Teaching is well informed, confident, engaging and precise. The work is appropriately matched to the full range of learners' needs, so that most are suitably challenged. Teaching methods are effectively related to the lesson objectives and the needs of learners. Teaching assistants and resources are well deployed and good use is made of time. Assessment of learners' work is regular and consistent and makes a good contribution to their progress.

Best practice teaching will evidence:

- Clear planning
- Formative assessment
- Different teaching strategies
- Effective classroom management

- Monitored progress
- Pace and challenge
- Productive classroom relationships
- Regular evaluation and review
- Relevant homework tasks set (where appropriate)
- Stimulating environment

Teaching and Learning in Early Childhood

Teaching and learning in Early Childhood provides an inquiry based curriculum in which students learn through exploration, hands-on experiences and play-based activities. Students are encouraged and motivated to learn through experiences of discovery, experimentation and reflection - working individually, in small groups and in whole class groups. Learning is organised under four units of inquiry for students to acquire key skills and develop positive attitudes. Each student is considered individually in their learning journey as they may be at a different stage in their understanding and development to their peers.

The curriculum takes a 'whole child' view and all aspects of learning and development are given equal emphasis and taught through our transdisciplinary units of inquiry. Learning and development covers the following areas:

- **Languages** - Communication, literacy and language
- **Social studies** – understanding the world
- **Mathematics**
- **Arts** – expressive arts and design
- **Science** – early science and technology skills
- **Personal, Social, Physical, Economic Education**

The Role of the Teacher in Early Childhood

Their role is to support and challenge children, learning collaboratively with the children through active listening, discussion, and reflection. Children are consistently encouraged to wonder, ask questions, test their own theories and take action around new knowledge they have discovered. The classroom environment is carefully planned to support students developing independence; providing opportunities to explore, investigate, discover, create, practise and repeat their developing knowledge and skills.

How the policy is implemented

Planning: long and medium term

Long and medium-term curricular planning is, with the IB Learner Profile at its core, in line with the IB programme's aspirations and expectations. The curriculum is devised and stored electronically.

Lesson planning

With the school's teaching and learning abstract in mind, teachers plan their lessons around progressively sequenced learning activities which typically will have a connection to prior

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Date reviewed: September 2016

Date for next review: September 2018

and/or forthcoming learning. This connection may be suggested through the selection of starter activity, relevant related activities and a plenary where learning is drawn together.

When planning a lesson, staff consider the following intentions:

- To get the lessons off to a **good start**
- To set realistic and progressive **Learning Objectives** for the students
- To select and organise suitable **resources**
- To check **student understanding**
- **To differentiate**
- **To stage** and **pace** a lesson
- To bring the lesson to a close with a **plenary**

Introduction/starter activities

Starter activities ensure that the lesson is introduced clearly, sharing the intended Learning Objectives (LOs) and success criteria with the students. Starter activities are devised to relate to prior learning and to link with the main activities of the lesson and success criteria.

Learning objectives

Learning Objectives will indicate what students should know or be able to do by the end of the lesson, to include knowledge, skills and interpretation. LOs are an intended result of instruction rather than the process of instruction itself, and will support the overarching goal of the unit or course (the wider context).

LOs are simple, unambiguous and clearly focused as a guide to learning. The purpose of a LO is not to restrict spontaneity or constrain the vision of education but to ensure that learning is focused clearly enough so that both students and teacher know what is going on.

LOs should be communicated to students at the start of the lesson. Students should be encouraged to engage with the LOs: They should know what it is they are aiming to achieve, the benefit of achieving it, how the gains will fit into the bigger picture of their learning and how they will know they have achieved the objective.

Teaching and Learning strategies

The range of teaching strategies used at the school is extensive and caters for the varying needs, abilities and aptitudes of our diverse student body.

The strategies include the following (non-exhaustive) list:

- Collaborative tasks
- Consideration and practice
- Demonstration
- Discussion and debate
- Enquiry
- Explanation
- Extended writing
- Independent learning
- Individual work

- Instruction
- Investigation
- Listening
- Making judgments
- Modelling
- Observation
- Oral and written feedback
- Peer and self-assessment
- Problem solving
- Questioning
- Reporting back
- Research
- Research
- Revision and consolidation
- Use of ICT

Differentiation

This is a pivotal structural element of lessons to enable all students to benefit from a classroom experience. Teachers should deploy a variety of means to differentiate eg grouping, seating plans, adapted resources, questioning and assessment. There is organisational differentiation, additionally, in that students are 'set' in certain subjects and follow certain curriculum pathways eg Language A and B.

Teachers plan their lesson with consideration of the learning needs of the students. With this in mind, tasks will be varied.

Students can be seated according to a seating plan aimed at maximising progress. Learning Support and EAL students are also suitably placed in class, where appropriate, to maximise progress.

Inclusion: Learning Support, EAL and Providing Challenge

The school, in accordance with its Learning Support Policy and approach to EAL and students who need challenge, ensures that all students can access the curriculum as fully as possible, with their individual needs met, allowing them to work towards their full potential. We recognise our responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) to eliminate discrimination and promote good relations between students, staff and parents.

In our school we aim to provide a curriculum that is appropriate to the needs and abilities of all our children. We plan our teaching and learning in such a way that we enable each child to reach for the highest level of personal achievement. This policy helps to ensure we recognise and support the needs of those children in our school who have been identified as 'gifted' and 'talented' according to the above national guidelines.

We respect the right of **all** children in our school, irrespective of differences in ability, to access a wide number of areas of learning, and to develop the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes that are necessary for their self-fulfilment and eventual development into active and responsible adults.

The identification process of students who may require support or challenge is ongoing and begins when the child joins our school. Each child's pre-school record gives details of their achievements and interests in particular areas. Discussions with parents enable us to add further details to these records.

Plenary

The plenary returns to the objectives of the lesson and can refer to success criteria. Strategies of assessment, to include feedback/peer and self-assessment/extension activity, may be appropriate to ensure that learning has been effective. Students' achievement against success criteria will inform planning of the subsequent lesson or lesson sequence.

Assessment and marking

See also full Assessment and Marking Policy.

Assessment procedures in the PYP/MYP/DP expect that all work assessed for the purposes of reporting must use the published PYP/MYP/DP criteria.

- The criteria are communicated to students in a form appropriate to each Grade level
- Guidance specific to particular tasks is used to give students clear information about strategies for achievement. The use of exemplars is encouraged
- Teachers should aim for a reliable and valid assessment of the students' work against each criterion. The number and type of assessment tasks required to achieve this should form part of the departmental assessment policy
- The reported level reached on each criterion should represent the best standard that the student can consistently achieve by the end of the semester. This is not necessarily an average or mean score.

Grades on a 1-7 scale summarise overall student achievement.

- The grade boundary tables published by the IB are used as a guide to set the standards for summative grades according to the departmental assessment policy.

Marking and Feedback

Student work is marked and feedback provided in order to:

- Help the student improve
- Identify and correct mistakes
- Provide effective feedback
- Provide information for grades on reports
- Support the student's confidence

Learning environment

While many classrooms serve multi-functional cross-subject purposes, classroom and corridor displays are intended to celebrate and share students' achievements and to enable students to understand what skills and knowledge are needed to attain levels or grades. With this in mind, teachers create classroom displays which feature, for example, inspiring student work as well as success criteria.

Appraisal system

The Appraisal System at the school is conducted to ensure that teachers are offered the opportunity to:

- Reflect on current practice
- Receive constructive and helpful feedback on professional practice
- Fulfil their full professional potential
- Build on strengths, tackle weaknesses and carry out professional responsibilities more effectively

Appraisal is intended to be a positive process aimed at helping staff to secure the highest possible quality of teaching, and general education. In particular the procedure should serve to:

- Improve teaching and learning
- Provide regular contact between colleagues
- Motivate staff by considering, above all, the quality of their teaching and the fulfilment of their responsibilities outside the classroom
- Identify professional development requests and needs
- Discuss career development
- Provide an opportunity to raise concerns
- Set objectives to be considered and discussed at the next appraisal, to take place the following term.

The Appraisal process should:

- Contribute to better motivation and increased job satisfaction
- Recognise work well done and record appreciation of contribution to the academic and wider life of the school
- Provide an opportunity for the appraisee to reflect on his or her teaching and other responsibilities
- Identify areas of strengths and areas for development
- Contribute to professional development