



Wigston Academies Trust

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

VOLUNTARY

DATE APPROVED:	22 nd September 2025
APPROVED BY:	Executive Headteacher
REVIEW FREQUENCY:	Every 3 years
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Signed by CEO:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. W. D. User'.

Date:

22/09/2025

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1. Purpose

The purpose of the Learning and Teaching Policy is to promote consistent practice, and work towards outstanding teaching across the Trust and provide students with opportunities to make sense of the information they receive and develop their own understanding.

2. Aims:

- Every student has the right to high quality teaching
- Maximise the learning potential of every student through high quality teaching
- Provide opportunities for continuing professional development (CPD) for staff to continue to develop teaching and learning
- Encourage collaboration of staff across the Trust and curriculum, facilitating the sharing of good practice in teaching and learning sessions

At Wigston Academies Trust, our vision is for all of our students, regardless of background and circumstances to make good progress and achieve grades that will allow them to follow their chosen path in the future.

We want our students to be curious inquisitive and develop a thirst for knowledge; resilience and to value effort. Students need to understand that sometimes making an error or failing at a task is an essential part of learning and recognise that developing a positive 'can do' attitude will help them to achieve.

This links to our 5 core values of *Resilience, Ambition, Responsibility, Engagement and Respect*.

3. To achieve the vision, teachers are expected to:

- Start every lesson with the Trust 3 slides – Do Now activity, Title and Learning Objective and the Learning sequence
- Follow the Trusts 5-part lesson structure (Appendix 1)
- Include retrieval and spaced learning in every lesson
- Have high expectations for all including: behaviour for learning, participation, engagement, presentation of work and outcomes
- Promote the Trusts 5 core values in lessons: Responsibility, Ambition, Respect, Engagement and Resilience
- Show outstanding knowledge and passion for their subject area
- Know their impact – be reflective, evaluate the effect they are having on their students learning and adjust teaching accordingly
- Ensure the Trusts Assessment Principles are used in lessons and throughout sequences of learning; and that department guidance is followed.
- Use assessment data to plan lessons which consider prior attainment and specific learning needs
- Know the key knowledge, concepts and schemes students need to know and what they need to improve in the different elements of a subject
- Scaffold work appropriately to challenge **all** learners

- Challenge students, expect the most out of them, enabling them to deepen their knowledge and understanding
- Use time, support staff, technology and other resources effectively (Appendix 2)
- Take responsibility for their own professional development; be committed to learning themselves as reflective practitioners who strive to keep up to date with knowledge and pedagogy
- Use their National College membership; to facilitate individualised CPD
- Know their students and the need of their class (this may be in the form of a class file – Appendix 3)

‘Every teacher needs to improve, not because they are not good enough, but because they can be even better’ Dylan William

4. Support

All staff will receive training and development in their role in a variety of ways including, but not limited to:

- Insets
- Whole Trust training and development sessions
- QA of Teaching & Learning. Some staff will also receive additional support such as coaching, mentoring personalised feedback. Some staff may receive one-to-one support.

5. There is not a recipe for the perfect teacher; the following information is guidance for staff to work within and beyond:

Knowing our students:

- Enables teachers to assess their needs effectively and raise their expectations – when is their engagement drifting? Why is it happening? Do they need help or time to work it out for themselves? These questions can only be answered if we know our students.
- Students need a fair, trusting safe environment that acknowledge they may not know and may make errors and develop the positive of being able to do it without mistakes. The teacher’s role is to maximise the efficiency of the time available, provide many learning opportunities to learn, ensuring time is spent learning and not just doing.

High levels of challenge:

‘A successful teacher establishes a student’s expectations of their abilities but then dispels those expectations by telling them they can do better’. Professor J. Hattie

- Appropriate challenge ensures students have high expectations of what they can do

Engagement:

- Students need to engage in what is happening within the classroom, this means that

they will be thinking about what we want them to think about and as a result learning is more likely to take place

- Lessons need to get off to a positive start, use a 'do now' task to hook their attention from the offset, making effective use of retrieval activities to develop recall skills and development of long-term memory 'sticky knowledge'

Explanation and modelling:

- New key components are explained effectively to enable students to be able to move on to other composites of the learning process.
- Once key knowledge has been explained, students need to be able to know how to apply it – one of the most recognised methodologies is for an expert to model the process

Opportunities for independence:

'Don't practice until you get it right, practice until you don't get it wrong' Unknown

- Students having opportunities to work independently – completing activities that are designed to allow application and practice of key knowledge.
- Carefully planned tasks will also allow intelligent practice which develops the thinking process rather than repeated mechanical activities.

Effective Questioning: (Appendix 4)

- Questioning is a key part of what takes place in a classroom and effective questioning can spark discussion, assess current performance and provide deeper levels of challenge
- Expert questioning can force our students to think, a key part of the learning process as we are more likely to lock information away in our long-term memory if we think about it
- Effective questioning also enables students to be able to use subject specific language within their responses
- Questioning can also be used to assess current performance allowing teachers to recognise if students are ready to move on to the next stage of a topic as well as diagnosing potential misunderstandings

Assessment and Feedback:

The Trust has 7 specific Assessment principles:

1. Creating a culture where there is no failure, only accessible feedback to act upon
2. Enabling teachers to identify barriers or gaps in knowledge and/or skills to inform planning
3. Ensuring that students know that their hard work and effort is recognised and valued
4. Empowering students to effectively reflect on their own learning
5. Helping learners to identify and implement strategies to improve their retention of knowledge and skills
6. Raising achievement and the self-esteem of students by providing them with regular diagnostic feedback

7. Allowing all stakeholders to monitor and understand student progress and to work in partnership with the Trust principles

Each subject area has their own guidance on what these key principles look like during lessons and shape what a student will see and experience in lessons.

More details can be found on this in the Assessment and Feedback Policy.

Effective assessment and feedback is a crucial tool in order to determine the next steps a student needs to take to continue to make progress.

Assessment and Feedback must be focussed on improving the progress of learners.

Formative assessment of student performance (Appendix 5)

- Skilful formative assessment supports effective scaffolding of next steps within a lesson and beyond. It enables us to consider the improvement in performance that a student is making. This also enables us to consider the direction of the next lesson
- It is important to acknowledge that learning takes place over time and as teachers we must reflect on this carefully and consider how we will change the improved performance into learning
- Teachers must be aware of the needs of specific groups such as SEND, More Able, EAL (English as an additional language), Pupil Premium, Looked After Children, BME (Black and Minority Ethnic Groups), Armed Forces and Travellers and will provide the appropriate support. Class files highlight these students in individual classes

6. Management of Teaching and Learning

It is important that learning and teaching is monitored in order to ensure that all students receive the best possible learning experience.

Effective practice is shared in a number of ways which includes:

- Good/outstanding practice observed in observations and or learning walks – asked to lead a teaching and learning session to share good practice and/or invited to mentor other staff
- CPD – delivered by staff who have shown areas of strength
- Inquiry Question/Personal Development project
- Instructional coaching pairs
- Focussed teaching and learning department meetings
- Teaching and Learning conversations
- Half termly Teaching and Learning bulletin
- Regular recommended reads for learning and teaching (L&T), including L&T library in the staffroom
- Directory of Good Practice to identify 'Best Practice' to arrange a drop-in or Teaching

and Learning conversation with identified colleagues

7. Monitoring:

Wigston Academies Trust is committed to ensuring that learning and teaching is rigorously evaluated and monitored to ensure it is of the highest quality. This process is tailored individually to teachers' career stage and/or teaching expertise and experience.

The following methods are used regularly to monitor teaching and learning:

- Regular lesson drop-ins with feedback
- A Teaching Typicality map kept and shared with staff regularly to support with developing Teaching and Learning good practice
- Instructional Coaching language used to frame Action Steps to help staff improve
- Drop-ins and Learning Walks completed by the Leadership Team and Heads of Department
- Tracking and monitoring of formal observations by the Leadership Team
- Peer observation
- Student Voice
- Work Scrutiny
- Teaching and Learning conversations

Lesson drop-ins:

Lesson drop-ins are short 10 minute drop-ins that happen regularly; usually by the HOD. Other observations may take place during the year, these may be more informal observations, peer observation to aid professional development or subject leaders monitoring the quality of education in their department.

Department Review:

Staff may be observed to gain a clear picture of the quality of education and teaching and learning standards across the whole department. Feedback will be received for all observations.

Senior Learning Walk/Drop-ins:

This is a means for the Leadership Team and others with delegated responsibility for teaching and learning to assess the standard of learning that is taking place in the Trust. These visits are drop-ins to inform monitoring of the quality of learning and engagement. They are not an observation of teaching and focus on students learning.

Observation Outcomes:

If an observation (formal or informal) demonstrates 'expert' practice, this colleague should be encouraged to participate in one or more of the following;

- Lead a workshop – department or whole school
- Conduct a peer observation; be encouraged to buddy up with a colleague
- Participate or Lead in mentoring/coaching
- Summarise a book or piece of research pertinent to the subject to share good practice
- Undertake Action research and feedback to staff at a teaching and learning session

8. Concerns:

Concerns will be dealt with in the Professional Development & Capability policies.



Lesson Structure – 5-Part Framework

Supporting our students to be the best that they can be and to achieve the OUTCOMES they deserve

CLEAR ROUTINES and HIGH EXPECTATIONS for all

Do Now (lesson warm up)	Direct Instruction (introduce new content – I do)	Guided Instruction (Teacher led practice – We do)	Independent Practice (Student centered practice – You do)	Recall and reflect (An aid to future planning)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Check and activate prior knowledge ✓ Introduce objectives and learning sequence (3 slides) ✓ Include spaced learning ✓ Check prerequisite knowledge ✓ Incorporate planned retrieval using low stakes quizzes ✓ Include feedback to identify misconceptions ✓ Link clearly into today's learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Introduce new knowledge (small steps, chunking) ✓ Provide clear explanations using concrete examples and elaboration ✓ Narrate the model ✓ Teach using live models and worked examples ✓ Use varied questioning techniques to check understanding and support development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Continue to use live models and worked examples ✓ Ask questions to check understanding ✓ Scaffolding where necessary ✓ Involve students in a full worked example ✓ Use examples and non-examples to develop understanding and correct misconceptions ✓ Ensure students 'practise right' ✓ Incorporate hinge questions to inform next steps – more to come in the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Scaffold difficult tasks – guiding practice to independence ✓ Ensure the WAGOLL/model and all steps are visible ✓ Provide opportunities for students to demonstrate knowledge and understanding ✓ Provide opportunities for practice, checking for success ✓ Provide systematic feedback - following department guidance for Assessment Principles e.g. live marking, peer/self-assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide a short task which shows how well all students have understood the key learning points ✓ Provide opportunities to recall knowledge/skills from the lesson to show current understanding/misconceptions and promote future retention ✓ Questioning
Resilience	Ambition	Responsibility	Engagement	Respect

Appendix 2: Effective use of Support Staff

Teaching Assistants/Learning Support Assistants are most effectively deployed in the classroom when they are informed of, and involved in, the learning:

- Teacher should give LSAs the scheme of work/lesson plans in advance
- Regular discussion of student progress and wellbeing should take place
- Teachers should give LSAs appropriate guidance on their role within the lesson or sequence of lessons
- LSAs should share their in-depth knowledge of the student being supported, particularly if progress differs significantly in other lessons

Appendix 3: Class Files

Subject staff will maintain their class files; these will be accessible to Heads of department, Leadership Team and other QA visitors. They will be marked as confidential and kept securely as they contain sensitive information on students.

Expected Content:

Learning context

Lesson planning examples

Class/group lists

Annotated class photos i.e. PP/SEND, etc

Seating plans

Individual pupil information including pupil profiles if SEND – could include examples of feedback

Subject overview

Performance information – up to date data tracking

Appendix 4: Questioning

Questioning - Developing students' capacity for thinking and independent learning can be promoted through asking more open ended questions. Wait time has to be increased to allow students to think about the question and make a considered response.

- Don't be afraid to give students thinking time
- Schemes of Learning could be question led and include key questions which capture students' imagination
- Involve students at the start of the lesson through open and closed question starters
- Use different types of questioning i.e. open, closed, higher order, Blooms taxonomy
- Use a range of means to encourage everyone to engage with the question; use of retrieval strategies or questioning techniques, e.g. Pose, Pause, Bounce
- Give students short discussion time in pairs/groups before discussing as a whole class Time this to ensure pace
- Create a community of enquiry by asking questions about new material at the beginning of a course/lesson
- Use hot seat questioning
- Try a traffic light system
- Give students an answer; they think what the question was
- Use questions on post-it notes

- Students ask questions about each other's work
- Do a mini quiz/questioning games
- Prepare a question chain so each student answers a question until the chain breaks
- Involve students in peer and self-assessment
- Explain a piece of work, students then respond with examples of what they have done
- Students use mark schemes to mark/level/grade other students' work
- Students use exemplars from previous years to mark/grade each other's work
- Peer proof reading of drafts in light of assessment criteria
- Students could identify 2 or 3 positive areas about another person's work and one target to work on
- Elect a peer observer to assess and provide constructive feedback to group work
- Develop self-assessment checklists or a proforma with a scale, to illustrate how far student has met learning objectives or increased confidence levels

Appendix 5: Assessment

Assessment for learning is not the same as assessment of learning. Assessment for learning is formative and takes place all the time in the classroom.

What does good formative assessment look like?

- Focused primarily on knowledge and targets specific curriculum content
- Sets high thresholds for success so as to assure student fluency and security
- Reinforces cognitive development
- Strong diagnostic power which feeds back into lessons
- Shows how to proceed next with particular students or sub-groups of students

What does good summative assessment look like?

- Samples an expanding domain
- A range of different question types
- Blends diverse elements of knowledge and skill in complex questions
- Includes extended question (problem-solving, essay writing)
- Challenging enough to distinguish between students, especially at the top end
- Subject specificity needs to drive the structure and design
- Not circulated prior to the exam as to avoid teaching to the test
- Used to discuss and distinguish between the performance of different students and sub group

AfL gets straight to the heart of good teaching by:

- Helping teachers help students to take the next steps in their learning
- Helping students to help other to take the next steps in their learning
- Helping students themselves to take the next steps in their learning

Assessment for Learning Strategies in Lessons

The AfL opportunities that should be planned into every lesson have the potential to ensure that students are equipped to achieve their very best. Students can be empowered to take control of their own learning and work in partnership with others and the teacher to ensure that the needs of all are met.

In addition to the Trust Feedback Policy using FAR, some strategies that can be used and provide a clear distinction between assessment of and assessment for learning can be seen in the selection below:

Key characteristics of AfL

Sharing learning objectives – all students need to understand what they are being asked to learn and why so that they are able to make connections

- Regular retrieval practice using a variety of strategies
- Provide a lesson title in the form of a question
- Make links to prior and future learning
- Key knowledge linked to end of the unit/progress tests
- Students guess and rate their confidence on key knowledge to promote ownership of objectives
- Use past work to demonstrate to students the standard of work expected through effective questioning
- Modelling (visually or through ICT) to demonstrate
- Students identify key words in the key knowledge. Teacher to support students in understanding of key words using glossaries, washing lines or key words on walls, key term quizzes, etc
- Encourage students to use the key terminology in their work