Stormont House School Teaching & Learning Policy:
'Mark, Plan, Teach…   …Evaluate'

Interim summary framework: This policy is indebted to the TeacherToolkit blog

This policy is designed to:

- Maximise teacher impact on student learning at each stage of the teaching and learning process
- Reduce unnecessary or inefficient elements of teacher workload
- Develop assessment-capable learners who can answer: 'Where am I going? How am I going? Where to next?'

Mark

Marking is written feedback to students. It has two purposes:

- so students make better progress by acting on your feedback
- to inform your future planning and teaching ('feed forward').

1. Marking must be primarily formative and be very clear about what students must act upon
2. Marking and feedback must be regular (we have agreed every 4 lessons) and relate to student success criteria.
3. The school's agreed marking code must be used.
4. Marking should be 'meaningful, manageable and motivating'. Quality should not be confused with quantity; the quality will be seen in the effect it has in subsequent work.

Plan

Planning is a process not a product; its purpose is to improve the learning of every student

1. Teachers must have a secure overview of every student's starting points, needs, progress and context to plan effective differentiation; challenge; teaching strategies; and deployment of additional adults (e.g. TAs)
2. Learning Intentions: Be clear and precise about the knowledge/skills you want students to learn, not what you want them to do. Break them down.
3. Success Criteria: be equally clear and precise about how the students can show you (or each other) what they have learned. Link surface to deep learning using the SOLO Taxonomy [one idea; many ideas; relate; extend], presented in a school-wide consistent format to maximise impact.
4. There must be evidence of long-term planning from your annual summary and schemes of work
5. The place where your scheme of work is differentiated to meet the needs of a particular class is in the *Unit Plan/ Overview* for that unit of work. [link to guidance]
6. Every class must have a seating plan that supports learning (e.g. use of Talk Partners)
7. Homework, wherever set, should be built into curriculum planning and its contribution to learning made explicit [*Homework policy is currently under discussion*].
8. There should be no dead time. This includes planning a flying start , with students purposeful from the beginning, appropriate pace for the intended learning and remaining conscious of 'Parkinson's Law' (Work expands to fill the time available for its completion) .

Teach

Teaching is a lifetime's craft. "*Every teacher needs to improve, not because they are not good enough, but because they can be even better*." (Professor Dylan Wiliam)

1. Teachers must be explicit about success criteria; there is no obligation to write them on the board in every lesson, but student awareness and understanding of them, and where they are in relation to them, is crucial
2. Teaching something does not mean that it has been learned; systematically check how well learning has 'stuck' through questioning and through how well the work produced meets the success criteria
3. All students should be asked targeted questions to check on or develop understanding, rather than relying on 'hands up'. Electronic or 'lolly stick' random name generators can be used to assist student focus
4. The importance of verbal feedback cannot be overstated given the literacy difficulties of so many of our students. Its impact should be observable in the students' next steps; there is no need to record it unless you find it useful.
5. Feedback should be targeted at task, process or self-regulation levels. Distinguish this from praise.
6. Go with the learning: the 'flow' of great progress is more important than sticking rigidly to a lesson plan.
7. We are all teachers of literacy and numeracy and so should embed reading, writing and communication and, where appropriate, mathematics in our teaching. Implementing the Marking Code and consistent strategies to build vocabulary across the curriculum will support this.

Repeat as necessary, then…   …evaluate!
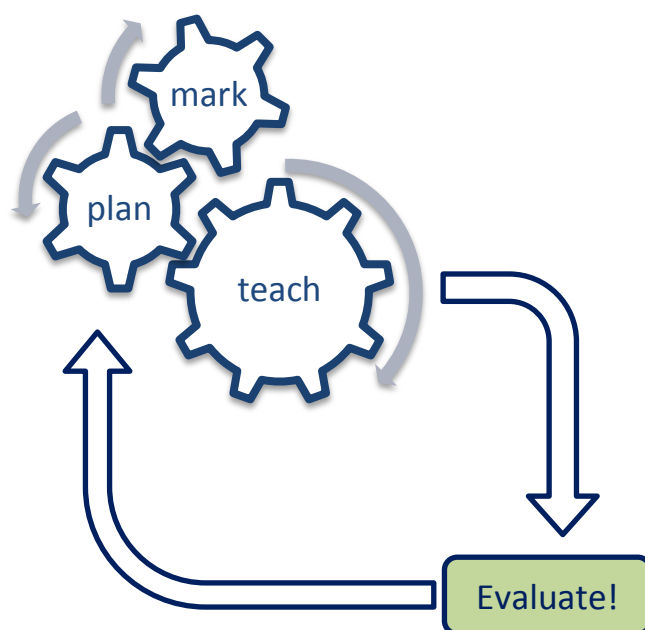
Evaluate

"*My role as teacher is to evaluate the effect I have on my students*" (Professor John Hattie)

Periodically (usually just prior to each half term) all teachers will evaluate their impact on student learning using the relevant subject assessment framework(s), enter that data onto the school system and then review the following:

1. What areas of skills, knowledge, and understanding have students mastered and become fluent in?
2. Which students are 'on track', which are doing better and who needs a closer look or possible intervention?
3. How do current 'flightpaths' compare with our expectations of good progress from each student's starting points?
4. Where has learning 'stuck' and where has it not?
5. How do I use this feedback to me to inform my future planning and teaching?
6. Who will I work with in order to keep improving?
7. What focused feedback do I now give to each student to improve their progress?
8. Is there a focus area that I might explore or improve by drawing on existing research or conducting my own (e.g. using a Visible Learning Impact Cycle process)?

References (to be added):
● Learning Policy finer details.
● Appendices
● Bibliography

Mindframes of Teachers (John Hattie et al)

1. I am an evaluator of my impact
2. I am a change agent
3. I explicitly inform students what success looks like from the outset
4. I see assessment as providing feedback to me about my impact
5. I work with other teachers to develop common conceptions of progress
6. I engage in dialogue more than monologue
7. I strive for challenge and not 'doing your best'
8. I use the language of learning
9. I see errors as opportunities for learning
10. I collaborate