



# Langley Grammar School



## Excellence in Teaching

2020-2021

### Our vision

At Langley Grammar School we expect all teachers to aspire to excellence in their classroom practice because we want the best for all our students.

Our vision for teaching is encapsulated in our 'Excellence in Teaching' model. We believe effective teaching is underpinned by relationships founded on high expectations and takes place where teachers use well-chosen strategies to assess, inform, engage and stretch students.

We do not prescribe a particular method or style of teaching but always look to use strategies that result in the best outcomes and most progress for students, using Excellence in Teaching as our framework.



## Our *Excellence in Teaching* model

The Excellence in Teaching model has a number of criteria, developed in consultation with staff and students, in light of research and with reference to national accountability frameworks. The model describes our approach to teaching and learning across the school.



The main objective of **Excellence in Teaching** is to **promote good student progress** in line with our curriculum intent. By progress we mean the development of subject specific knowledge, understanding, skills over time, often shown by success in formal assessments, student work and examinations outcomes. We also aim to promote students' wider personal development as defined in our personal development framework and aligned with our school ethos. The Excellence in Teaching criteria, to which we aspire, can be found below.



### Relate

- Respectful relationships are modelled and in evidence. Students respect the contributions of their peers and work effectively together. Teacher-student interactions are always respectful.
- High expectations of students have been instilled in relation to:
  - Behaviour - low level disruption is absent or extremely rare. Students' behaviour is typically exemplary. Students are punctual to lessons.
  - Organisation and presentation of work – students' work consistently meets the expectations set out in the Excellence in Teaching handbook. Students are properly equipped, homework is completed punctually.
  - Learning – Substandard work does not go unchallenged. Students are encouraged to have excellent attitudes to learning. Teachers reward students for showing effective learning behaviours.
- Where students fail to meet expectations, it is not tolerated and sanctions are applied consistently according to the school's behaviour policy.



## Assess

- The teacher uses assessment to diagnose students' strengths and weaknesses and to adapt teaching and tailor future planning to meet students' emerging needs.
- The teacher uses probing and inclusive questioning and other assessment techniques to check students' understanding and to identify and swiftly correct any misconceptions.
- Clear success criteria ensures that students know precisely how to do well.
- Assessments are carefully designed and scheduled to enable students to embed key curriculum knowledge and support long-term memory retention.
- Students receive regular, precise and comprehensible feedback in line with the school's minimum expectations and the agreed departmental approach.
- There is a clear and explicit approach for students to reflect on and use the feedback they have received to improve and make progress (DIRT).

## Inform

- The teacher has expert subject knowledge.
- The students benefit from high-quality teacher instruction: teachers present subject content with great clarity; skilful use of strategies for modelling and reviewing learning.
- Learning activities over time are carefully selected and coherently sequenced to help students achieve the learning goals (objectives) in curriculum plans. For example, teaching over time explicitly allows students to build on prior knowledge and understanding, develop fluency and apply knowledge to different contexts.
- The teacher seizes opportunities through the subject curriculum to promote students' wider development over time in line with the school's personal development framework.
- The teacher uses thoughtfully chosen strategies over time to help students develop disciplinary literacy and secure a sophisticated knowledge of tier 2/3 vocabulary.
- Effective planning of homework and learning beyond lessons enables students to consolidate or extend learning and/or prepare for future lessons.

## Engage

- The teacher conveys enthusiasm and clear rationale for the content taught, which promotes students' interest, enjoyment and attention.
- Well-chosen learning activities engage and challenge students meaning they remain on task and engrossed in their learning.
- While in lessons, students only ever talk about what they are learning.
- Learning time is maximised, for example, lessons begin promptly and the management of resources is efficient and transitions are slick.
- Learning time is use wisely, for example, the time allocated to different learning activities is well-judged and time is not wasted by setting students tasks requiring little cognitive challenge (e.g. extended copying from the board).

## Stretch

- The tasks set are demanding reflecting a challenging and ambitious curriculum.
- Risk taking is encouraged and activities are sufficiently challenging that even the most able will make mistakes on occasion and learn from them.
- Work set enable students to work at the top grade on specifications and beyond.
- Questioning strategies and learning activities over time enable students to 'think hard' about the subject matter and grapple with complexity.
- Teaching over time is differentiated, catering carefully for students' individual needs (including special educational needs).

## Progress

- Over time, the large majority of students are on track to meet or exceed expectations (lower school) or target grades (GCSE and A Level).
- There is no significant gap between the progress of vulnerable students (e.g. disadvantaged, SEND) and other students in the group or cohort.
- Any students who fall behind are supported effectively so they catch up.
- Remote learning provision for self-isolating students is effective, so they don't fall behind.
- Students' work/outcomes are consistently high quality and provide evidence of progression.

# Assessment, feedback and marking

The school's approach to assessment, feedback and marking has developed in response to the changes in curriculum and examination framework and with regard to concerns about teacher workload. Each department should have an agreed approach to assessment, marking and providing formative feedback to students that is consistent with whole-school expectations set out in this handbook. Each subject teacher is expected to implement the agreed approach consistently and this will be monitored through appropriate work sampling and moderation procedures.



## Whole-school expectations for formal assessments

Assessment is an integral part of curriculum planning to aid student progress. Formal assessments should be robust and meaningful so that the data generated can be used to identify student progress over the period and the impact of teaching over time. Assessments should also support student progress through helping embed knowledge in their long-term memory. Departments have defined assessment objectives that students' work towards over time. Our approach is to assess students' progress towards these objectives in comparison to the progress of a *typical* or *average* student in the school. Judgements are then made as to whether students are broadly:

- ⇒ **Approaching** the expected level of progress
- ⇒ **Meeting** the expected level of progress
- ⇒ **Exceeding** the expected level of progress

We recognise that the judgement reached could conceivably fluctuate across the year. Students who **consistently** meet the expected levels of progress will be well prepared to begin their GCSE courses.

At **GCSE and A Level** assessments are designed to relate to examination board assessment objectives. Using assessment data, teachers are asked to provide predictions which are distinct from target grades:

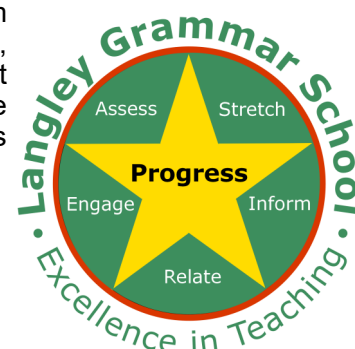


⇒ **Predictions** are the final grades we believe each student is most likely to achieve. They are based on our knowledge of the student and the demands of the subject.

⇒ **Targets** are the grades we think each student is capable of achieving. They are based on statistical expectations and students' prior attainment, incorporating a degree of challenge.

We recognise that the accuracy of predictions will improve as more assessment data becomes available over the course of a GCSE or A Level course.

Assessment data feeds into the whole-school reporting system. The frequency and timing of data entry is intended to enable accurate tracking of progress, inform decisions over intervention and provide timely feedback to students, parents and other stakeholders. Departments assess students at appropriate points in the curriculum, while taking into account the reporting cycle. This ensures that up-to-date assessment data is available at each data entry point.





## Whole-school expectations for feedback

In the school we use the term **feedback** to describe information that students receive about their progress that enables them to improve. As specified in our **Excellence in Teaching** model, we believe that providing students with effective feedback is essential and should therefore be common feature of teaching over time.



We want to ensure that the feedback students receive on their learning is clear and detailed, provides specific information about how they can improve and is communicated in a way that is likely to encourage them to act upon it. Students should also be given structured opportunities to respond to the feedback they receive so they make further progress (sometimes called dedicated improvement and reflection time: DIRT). In short, effective feedback will be both **meaningful** and **motivating**.

As well as being **effective**, our approach to giving feedback to students must also be **efficient**. We want to ensure that our approaches create manageable demands on teachers' time and are the time invested is commensurate with the impact on learning.

The school has the following **minimum expectations** with regard to providing feedback to students.

- Quality:** All students receive detailed, precise, comprehensible feedback on what they've done well and how they can improve their knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Application:** All students use the feedback effectively to improve the quality of their work and make gains in knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Frequency:** All students should receive **regular** feedback on an ongoing basis. As a minimum they should typically receive **quality feedback and apply it** (as described immediately above) at least once during 6-8 hours of learning.

We recognise that what constitutes effective feedback to students will vary from one subject area to another. Each department therefore aims for best practice in its approach for feedback while ensuring that it fulfils the requirements of the school's minimum expectations and reflects the nature of the subject and its curriculum. Departments may not always provide written feedback to students. Whole class feedback, oral feedback and peer assessment could prove effective as alternative strategies.

**All teachers** within a subject team are expected to follow the departmental approach. However, innovations in practice, with agreement from the subject leader is also encouraged, as we will always be interested in finding more effective and efficient ways of giving feedback to students.



## Whole school expectations for marking

As a principle, teachers should not spend any more time on marking than is commensurate with its impact on student progress. We recognise that there are different purposes for the marking of students' work.

In some cases teachers will use marking to help them formally assess students' progress. For example, teachers may mark formal assessments in order to reach *summative judgements about students' attainment*, which are then reported or inform reports on pupil progress.

Marking may also be used as a strategy for identifying what students have done well and how they can improve. This can provide the basis for periodic, *detailed formative feedback* (which may be written), which students then respond to, promoting progress. Marking can therefore be an important strategy to assess students' progress and provide effective feedback.

Departments may adopt approaches other than marking to formally assess students' work and to provide formative feedback to students. Where departments have adopted alternative approaches, which meet the school's expectations for assessing progress and providing formative feedback, there is no expectation that teachers will also routinely mark students' work.

However, the school recognises the importance of *monitoring students' work* to ensure that our high expectations are being met. Teachers will therefore periodically look at class work, homework, notes, folders and electronic exercise books (e.g. OneNote) to ensure that students are meeting expectations in terms of the accuracy, quality and completion of class work and homework; and that standards of literacy, presentation and organisation are appropriate. **This may take place outside of lesson time or during lesson time.** Teachers will address issues with students and classes as and when they arise. There is **no expectation** that such monitoring requires teachers to make specific written comments or marks on students' work.



## Presentation and organisation of students' work

We have high expectations of our students; therefore we expect them to organise their work well, write legibly and take care over presentation. We also recognise the importance of students having well organised notes, books and folders to support effective revision. As indicated in our Excellence in Teaching model, teachers are expected to instil and enforce these high expectations.

We recognise that different subject areas may have their own requirements and expectations in this area, but the following general principles and expectations will normally apply:

- Students should normally use blue or black ink for writing and pencil for drawing.
- Titles should be written for each new section of work and underlined using a ruler.
- The date on which work is done should be included.
- Graffiti / doodling is not acceptable on any written work.
- Worksheets or handouts should be neatly attached to exercise books.
- Folders should be logically organised with work filed appropriately.
- Where online exercise books (e.g. OneNote) are being used, pages should be organised clearly and logically.

## Promoting Excellence in Learning

We aim to support students to become increasingly effective learners. Our student *Excellence in Learning* team developed a model to describe excellent learning behaviours, which we aim to cultivate in students through the whole curriculum.

We believe that to be effective learners, students need to develop the following attributes and behaviours:

- Motivated: wanting to learn and succeed and therefore working hard
- Curious: interested, inquisitive, shown by going beyond the specification, asking questions, reading around the subject
- Responsible: not making excuses for their outcomes, instead realising that their learning is a result of their actions and attitudes
- Resourceful: taking advantage of resources that help them for example, parents, peers, teachers, text books and apps.
- Persistence: not giving up, recovering quickly from a bad result, having another go at improving a task, finding ways to overcome barriers and working through things they find difficult
- Creative: innovating, coming up with new ideas and original solutions and producing distinctive outcomes; making connections between subjects and topics
- Reflective: reviewing progress and learning from mistakes, taking feedback as a gift and using it to improve.





## iPads for learning

At Langley Grammar School iPads are currently used by students from Year 8 through to Year 13, with each student having access to a device. iPads can be engaging and exciting to use and can open up new ways of working: they enable students to research, collaborate, create and organise their thinking in ways that would be difficult or even impossible with more traditional methods of teaching.

We therefore see considerable value in iPads as a tool to enable excellent teaching and learning. However, the use of iPads should not be seen as an end in themselves. Alongside the use of new technologies we still place great value on more traditional methods of teaching. Our approach is that teachers will use teaching methods, old or new, that have the most positive impact on students' learning.



Examples of how iPads can be used to support excellence in

teaching are given below.

Type of use	Description	Example	Potential Advantage
<b>Redefinition</b>	Technology allows for the creation of new task, previously inconceivable.	Students create an iBook of videos, audio clips, images, interactive text and links on a single topic instead of a Word document.	A richer blend of media facilitates the dual coding of knowledge and therefore students are more likely to recall information.
<b>Modification</b>	Technology allows for the redesign of task.	Students use iMovie to create a presentation to show to the rest of the group using Apple TV, rather than deliver a stand-up presentation.	The content of the presentation isn't 'lost' and can be shared with other students for revision.
<b>Augmentation</b>	Technology acts as a direct substitute with functional improvement.	Using Socrative to test students' factual knowledge rather than setting a paper-based quiz.	The teacher gets instant feedback on every student and can adapt teaching accordingly.
<b>Substitution</b>	Technology acts as a direct tool substitute with no functional change.	Emailing students a pdf of an article rather than providing a print out.	Saves time and money photocopying the article.



# Homework

We recognise the important role that homework plays in providing opportunities for learning outside timetabled lessons and to develop students' skills in time management and organisation.

Setting homework also provides opportunities to be creative and independent, reflecting our school ethos. Homework should be **meaningful** and **contribute to student progress**, in line with our **Excellence in Teaching** model.

Homework will usually have one of the following aims:

- ⇒ To **consolidate** or **extend** students' learning in lessons
- ⇒ To provide opportunities for students to **practise** particular skills
- ⇒ To enable students to learn new material, **independently**
- ⇒ To **prepare** students for upcoming topics and lessons
- ⇒ To help students **prepare for assessments**, tests and examinations



We do not have a set homework timetable for each year group. Instead, teachers will set homework at appropriate points over the course of a unit of learning. The nature and frequency of homework tasks will depend on the needs of particular subject areas, and each department has developed its own approach.

**In Years 7 to 11** students may typically expect to spend between 7 and 10 hours of homework each week, averaged through the year. Students in the Sixth Form are provided with additional time for study in their timetables, so can expect to receive more homework than students in Years 10 and 11.

Typically, we might expect **Sixth Form** students to spend around 20 hours per week on homework and independent study outside lessons.

In addition to completing set pieces of homework, teachers will also encourage students to be proactive in their studies, for example by reviewing their learning, preparing for assessments and examinations and reading beyond the curriculum.



# Quality assurance

## Key principles

The school has robust processes of quality assurance to monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, seek out good practice, identify training needs and inform strategic priorities for development. The school's Excellence in Teaching criteria is used as a basis for assessing the quality of teaching alongside data on student progress and outcomes.

A calendar for quality assurance is developed each year for the school. The activities typically include those in the table below.

Formal reviews of the impact of teaching over time (ROTOTs)	Learning walks by subject leaders and senior staff	Student voice exercises
Book looks and departmental moderation	Feedback scrutiny exercises	Data analysis and impact meetings

The school's senior leadership is committed to ensuring that observation and other forms of quality assurance are developmental and is supportive to all of those involved in the process.

Those leading quality assurance of classroom practice understand that they will:

- carry out the role with professionalism, integrity and courtesy,
- evaluate objectively,
- feedback accurately and fairly,
- act with appropriate discretion about the information gained.

