



Teaching and Learning Strategy

Updated July 2026

1. Introduction

At Aylesbury High School, we offer every student a balanced and broad curriculum which is ambitious, forward-looking, innovative and of the highest academic quality.

Our school vision is to develop “uniquely talented young adults, who are independent, strong and confident” and our mission “A girls’ grammar school creating a welcoming environment which draws the very best from all in our community. Achieved by providing an ambitious education that stimulates creative and critical thinking, values diversity and facilitates dynamic personal development.” We recognise each student’s individual need, and we go beyond using exam outcomes alone to benchmark our success.

As well as exam success we want students to exhibit our AHS Values of Boundless Aspiration, Resilient Bravery, Curious Engagement and Selfless Generosity. In all that we do, we aim to prepare students for life in the fast-changing world of which they will become adult members, ready to play an active and positive part in the local, national and international community.

This document aims to set out the main principles and shared responsibilities for promoting effective teaching and learning across the school community.

2. Learning at AHS

We expect and encourage students to actively engage in their learning and to take responsibility for it. They should be able to answer the following questions about their learning in each of their subjects:

- What are you learning?
- Why are you studying this? Why are you studying this now?
- Does your learning change, challenge, or build on previous learning? If so, how?
- Are you encouraged to think deeply about your learning?
- Can you identify the new skills that you have learnt?
- Can you identify the new knowledge that you have learnt?
- How will you be assessed?
- How do you receive feedback from your teacher?
- How do you act on the feedback you receive?

3. Intent of high quality teaching and learning at AHS

At AHS, students learn through teaching that is rigorous, engaging and high quality. This is facilitated by the following principles:

- Teachers are ambitious for their students and plan their lessons so they support students to progress in their subjects and take ownership of their learning
- Teachers give careful consideration to the purpose of assessment, and think and plan beyond the exam specification
- Teachers have pride in their classroom practice and reflect their department’s Curriculum Design in their classroom
- Teachers recognise that not every student has the same needs or barriers; they take time to learn about their students’ needs by liaising with appropriate staff members (DSL, SEND

- team, PP Lead), how to support them, and pre-empt curricular barriers
- Teachers impassion students about their subject
- Teachers are encouraged to be innovative in their classroom pedagogy. They learn together and from each other by making the most of others in their teams, and around the school, and are encouraged to be open and honest if they need support
- Teachers promote the AHS Values in lessons; this includes ensuring that all students are challenged, creating opportunities to work independently and collaboratively, and explicitly and implicitly encouraging the development of students' own understanding of their learning patterns
- Teachers take advantage of appropriate opportunities to connect learning to wider contexts, e.g. literacy (including oracy), AHS values, other subjects, Arts Mark and careers, and develop students' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural education.

4. Implementation of high quality teaching and learning at AHS

We recognise that high quality teaching and learning looks different in every subject; at AHS we value individual subject integrity. Each subject has devised its own curriculum which it is the responsibility of all team members to implement in their respective classes.

As such, there is no prescribed lesson structure at a whole-school level; lesson structure should be designed and adapted to deliver the curriculum best to the particular group of students and the subject. This autonomy is balanced by 'The AHS Classroom', quality assurance, work scrutinies, learning walks from a variety of staff members (including governors), lesson observations and data analysis, to ensure there is equity of provision for all students.

The AHS Classroom sets out three strands to support staff to set high expectations for all pupils, remove barriers to achievement through effective instruction, curriculum design and formative assessment, and adapt their practice to meet pupils' needs:

- 1) Core Expectations - *"what is vital for some students is valuable to all"*: evidence-based pedagogical techniques that are proven to have the highest impact on student progress and understanding, tailored to our AHS context and students. Teachers should ensure that these are met in every lesson, as appropriate.
- 2) Building a Thinking Culture - an evidence based shared language and toolkit, as set out in The AHS ThinkTank, to stretch students to think creatively, critically and metacognitively about their learning.
- 3) The AHS Values - teachers should always endeavour to reward *process over outcome* to support students to develop and embrace positive learning characteristics.

All teachers must annotate their seating plans following the 'First in Line' (FiL) approach to support SEND, PP, DSL, PDSL and YC. They should have these to hand in all lessons as an 'aide memoire' to ensure they know who their FiL students are and how best to support them. FiL students should be prioritised wherever possible both within and outside of the classroom. Examples might include:

- Marking their homework or assessments first (or early on in a set)
- Checking in on FiL first when circulating or through questioning
- Handing back their work first
- Considering FiL when grouping students
- Consider where to seat students to enable the above to happen
- Liaising with the relevant team (SEND, PP, Wellbeing) to better understand individual pupils needs and how best to support them
- Requesting that Consultation Evening appointments are arranged where a parent/carer has not already done so

4.1 Curriculum design

When evaluating their curriculum, departments may find the following framework useful:

- Stage 1: Departments work collaboratively, taking cross-curricular opportunities into account such that the student's whole experience is connected, on their curriculum model.
- See Appendix 1 for questions to support discussions about curriculum evaluation and design.
- Stage 2: The Head of Department consults the team to define an ambitious vision for their curriculum. They consider the context of the School, its students and current pedagogical developments to inform that vision, and consider any gaps in student learning that may be ongoing as a result of the COVID pandemic, such as **foundational literacies**.
- Curricular responsibilities are defined and distributed by the Head of Department.
- Stage 3: The Head of Department leads the planning of the curriculum with the support of their team. Planning documents and resources are created (e.g. schemes of work, long term plans, learning journeys, etc); these should systematically and explicitly break down the curriculum into components and sequence the content in a logical progression that ensures effective progression of student knowledge and skills throughout the key stages.
- Stage 4: All members of a department should be able to facilitate and articulate their Curriculum Design & the learning journey:
- Why the curriculum is sequenced and structured as it is
 - How the curriculum allows students to progress in their subject
 - How they have prepared students to study new topics and concepts / **their next steps**.

4.2 Support for the delivery of subject level teaching and learning

The school supports teachers in providing students with a first class learning environment in the following ways:

- Support for attendance at subject-specific courses
- Support for subject association memberships for departments, giving access to recent examples of subject-specific pedagogy, best practice and academic support; a network of like-minded colleagues
- Admin removed from subject time as far as possible
- INSET time specifically dedicated to discussing teaching and learning, pedagogy foci and sharing best practice
- Engagement with academic theory and research, supported by the School's membership of ICGS
- Opportunities to observe colleagues
- Opportunities to share best practice, learn from others, and support an open dialogue about teaching and learning in departments - within School and within a network of local schools
- Research opportunities to support staff in developing a self-reflective approach to classroom practice and evaluating the impact of their classroom practice
- Providing formalised opportunities to share findings with colleagues to develop their practice
- HODs can liaise with their line manager should further support be needed to drive change (e.g. time off timetable).

5. Roles, Responsibility and Accountability

All members of the AHS community play an important role in promoting teaching and learning of the highest quality. Comprising:

- The Governing Body is responsible for reviewing and supporting this strategy and the resources needed to carry it out

- The Headteacher (working with the Deputy Headteacher) is responsible for ensuring that:
 - the curriculum meets legal requirements
 - teaching and learning are of the highest standard possible
 - appropriate monitoring and evaluation are in place
- The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring that this strategy is implemented, fit for purpose, reviewed regularly, and shared with teaching staff so they understand their contribution to promoting effective learning
- The School Improvement Plan (SIP) acts to ensure that the curriculum is kept under review and for proposing and consulting on appropriate modifications on an annual basis
- Head of Departments are responsible for ensuring that this strategy is implemented within their teams. This will be evaluated through biennial QARs (Quality Assurance Reviews)
- Teaching staff are responsible for being aware of whole-school and department guidance on teaching and learning, and for delivering teaching and learning that is inclusive and designed to meet the needs of all learners
- All staff are responsible for supporting, cooperating with and encouraging their colleagues and students to promote effective learning
- Students are responsible for taking advantage of the opportunities that are afforded to them by showing a desire to learn with the appropriate mindset, persevering through challenges and bringing the appropriate equipment for lessons
- Parents/Carers are responsible for supporting their children in their studies. The school aims to support parents in this role through effective parental engagement and AHS information and consultation evenings.

6. Measuring impact of high quality teaching and learning at AHS - Assessment and Feedback

6.1 Assessment

Aims:

- To enable students to identify their strengths and areas of development in each subject area
- To ensure the feedback students receive is effective and meaningful
- To promote consistency in marking and feedback in each subject area
- To manage everyone's marking expectations.

Assessment at AHS has many strands. These broadly fit into Assessment of Learning (summative) and Assessment for Learning (formative) and can be defined as:

Formative assessment: a continuous process in the classroom, planned for and developed by teachers and their departments. Teachers use it to adapt their teaching practice, address gaps in student knowledge and/or skills and inform future practice. Students use it to improve their learning.

Summative assessment: used to evaluate students' learning of an instructional unit by comparing it against some standard or benchmark.

Key aspects include:

- Regular review of student work
- In-class checking of student understanding, e.g. through questioning
- Formal assessment, such as end of year exams or end of unit assessments
- Target setting and individual support
- Reporting, data assessment points and reviews
- Where appropriate, sharing success criteria ahead of assessed tasks.

All teachers are responsible for making regular use of assessment data to track the progress of the students they teach. Where there concerns about a student's effort or progress, follow the steps and guidance laid out in the [Academic Intervention Timeline](#).

6.2 Feedback

Feedback can take a variety of forms; written or verbal, individual, group or whole class, peer and self-assessment. As students have access to electronic devices, feedback may be shared electronically via Google Classroom or other digital learning forums. Teachers are encouraged to share with students the types of feedback they should expect to receive in their lessons. Feedback and marking can take into account class work, homework and both formative and summative assessment; it should:

- Improve teachers' understanding of students' work by identifying their strengths, gaps in learning and areas of development
- Monitor the quality and organisation of the students' work and identify any learning needs
- Motivate and support students in their understanding of how to progress and succeed
- Contribute to reporting evidence
- Inform planning and adaptive classroom practice
- Develop learning e.g. re drafting of work prior to an assessment
- Be manageable for teachers
- Provide clear guidance on how the students are progressing and how they need to improve using a 'WWW/EBI' format
- Be shared with the student in a timely manner so that they can build on the set targets before the next piece of assessed work
- Provide a grade/mark/attainment descriptor for formal assessments/end of unit tests, etc.
- Promote high expectations for standards of presentation and organisation
- Highlight any concerns that are then shared with relevant staff in line with the [Academic Intervention Timeline](#)
- Encourage students to be metacognitive and reflect on their learning
- Include regular opportunities to review that students have made the improvements recommended to them.

Please note that students receive a different proportion of teaching hours per fortnight for different subjects that they learn. As a consequence, some subjects will give feedback on class or homework more regularly than others. It is expected that all work of significance completed by a student will be acknowledged within one to two weeks and that written or verbal feedback will ideally be gained within the timeframes below (although there may be occasions where an extra week is needed during particularly demanding seasons):

- Within two weeks of completion for subjects that see students more than once a week
- Within three weeks for subjects that only see students once a week

Regularity of Formal Feedback

- Students in KS3 should receive at least 1 piece of formal feedback per subject (from assessment or home learning) per half-term.
- Students in KS4 should receive at least 2 pieces of formal feedback per subject (from assessment or home learning) per half-term.
- Students in KS5 should receive at least 2 pieces of formal feedback per subject (from assessment or home learning) per half-term.

Students should be given time to respond to feedback - this can be completed as part of a lesson, homework or independent learning.

Attainment Grades

KS3: It is up to each department to decide on an attainment system which works best for them. It is fine to give Working At style grades for pieces of work, or marks out of 10, 50 etc, or department specific level descriptors. Teachers within each department must do the same.

KS4 & 5: It is at the discretion of each department when they choose to give GCSE or A Level grades for individual pieces of work. The school requires them for the following:

GCSE: Year 10 exam + Year 11 mock + 5 LAGs across the 2 year course.

A Level: Year 12 exam + Year 13 mock + 5 LAGs across the 2 year course + UCAS Prediction

Feedback through peer and self-assessment

Peer and self-assessment can be in different forms, e.g. written or verbal. It is important for the students to recognise their own and others' achievements. Peer and self-assessment is to be used where appropriate and should be read and monitored by the teacher.

6.3 Reports and Parent Consultation Evenings.

Teachers record student progress termly on SIMS or their agreed departmental spreadsheet. Parents will receive three data reports per year. Data reports provide students and their parents with the predicted attainment for the end of the course for KS4 and 5. At KS3, the descriptor 'Working At' is based on where we expect the average AHS student to be for that year group at that point in time. We expect to see a fairly even distribution across the three descriptors, 'Working Towards', 'Working At' and 'Working Beyond'.

Report publication dates for the current academic year are on the school calendar. Additionally, each year group has one Parent Consultation Evening per year (two for Years 11 and 13).

6.4 Using AI as an Assessment and/or feedback tool

AI tools can offer significant opportunities for assessment and feedback, such as reducing teacher workload and providing instantaneous, personalised feedback to students. At the current time, however, the quality and reliability of AI tools for assessment and feedback is inconsistent. Teachers should be aware that students and parents often value teacher assessment above AI marking, and can feel devalued if the essential process of assessment and feedback is outsourced. It is also essential that teachers build up an effective and robust sense of all of their students' progress and 'normal way of working' in a nuanced way so they can quickly identify where support is needed or to address concerns surrounding plagiarism or a student becoming overly reliant on AI.

The guidance below outlines the School's current position, but this will be reviewed regularly in response to changes in technology and the curriculum as appropriate:

- 1) AI should never be used for summative assessments (i.e. high stakes assessments that are used to give students a summative grade, or contribute significantly to e.g. LAGs/predicted grades)
- 2) Staff must never use Generative AI tools to grade, assess, or write feedback for official coursework, Non-Exam Assessments (NEA), or controlled components. Doing so compromises exam integrity and violates centre malpractice frameworks
- 3) Teachers might like to explore the use of AI as an interactive assessment tool in the classroom with students, e.g. asking Gemini to mark a piece of work against a markscheme and then analysing and critiquing the generated response with the class
- 4) Teachers may wish to use AI as part of their wider formative assessment processes. In such cases, the following guidance must be followed:
 - The tool must have been approved by the Software Approval Committee

- There should be prior agreement from the HOD
- Prior to using it on student work, the tool should be tested and the HOD/teacher confident that it will achieve the identified aims of the task and is reliable and accurate
- AI should only ever be a small part of an overall formative assessment strategy - it is essential that teachers are interacting regularly and meaningfully with the student work themselves
- There must be transparency with students that an AI tool has been used

5) Teachers may wish to use AI as part of their feedback to students. In such cases, the following guidance must be followed:

- The tool must have been approved by the Software Approval Committee
- There should be prior agreement from the HOD
- Prior to introducing it, the tool should be tested and the HOD/teacher confident that the tool generates feedback with high levels of reliability and accuracy
- The department/teacher should have some sort of quality assurance system in place to periodically check the generated feedback for accuracy and appropriateness (e.g. sampling a selection of student work once a half term)
- The teacher must ensure the generated output is personalised and that they have reviewed it to ensure it is inline with their professional opinion
- The **Staff Acceptable Use of IT** policy must be followed (e.g. considering data protection)
- AI should only ever be a small part of an overall feedback strategy - it should not become the predominant mode of feedback
- There must be transparency with students that an AI tool has been used so they understand how that feedback has been created and the value they get out of it

6) Teachers should always refer to the **Staff Acceptable Use of IT** policy alongside the guidance above.

7. Homework and Independent Study

Rationale

Homework is work that is set to be done outside the timetabled curriculum to reinforce and further students' learning, and to develop their learning habits. It contains an element of independent study in that it is not usually directly supervised by a teacher, but homework tasks should always be planned and focused, and linked to class learning. Not all homework is necessarily done at home; for some students who find it hard to work at home, or for some tasks which may require resources (books, software, equipment) more readily available at school, it is desirable to carry out the task at school during e.g. Homework Club or during study periods.

It requires careful planning on the part of the teacher, to ensure that it is meaningful to the student and manageable with regards to both the students completing the set tasks and to the teachers responding to the completed work.

Aims

Homework enables students to:

- Revise/consolidate/practise or expand upon work/subject content covered in class
- Prepare for new learning activities
- Access resources not available in the classroom
- Develop research skills
- Have an opportunity for independent work
- Show progress and understanding
- Provide feedback to the teacher to evaluate learning
- Enhance their study skills e.g. planning, time management and self-discipline
- Take ownership and responsibility for learning.

Expectations

In Years 7 - 11 students will receive a homework timetable (also available via the school website) to help organise their time. The homework timetable sets out the days of the week homework will be set for each of the subjects and will show the recommended amount of time that should be spent to complete it.

For Years 7-9, homework should not be set for any of the holiday periods. For Years 10-13, homework can be set to be completed during half term breaks, but not during the Christmas or Easter holidays (although public examination classes may use this time for revision purposes or independent study).

In the Sixth Form, students might reasonably be expected to complete one hour of homework for every lesson studied, as well as more general consolidation and extension activities.

Unsupervised Subject Study Periods (Year 12)

In Year 12, students have 8 hours per fortnight of lesson time with their teachers plus one further timetabled hour with their classes (not directly supervised by the teacher). The classroom teacher should set work for this 'ninth hour' that students can complete independently or with their classmates. This can be set weekly or in longer chunks with an extended due day and check point, as agreed with the HOD. Departments should discuss and agree how students can make best use of this time to support their learning, mindful of not adversely increasing teacher workload. The work should be set as a Google Classroom assignment.

Tasks might include (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Pre-reading
- Flipped learning tasks/lesson preparation
- Lesson consolidation
- Practice activities
- Research

There should be an agreed departmental system on how best to check that students have completed the set work. This could be, e.g. via some verbal questioning to check understanding at the beginning of the next lesson, or as part of the wider departmental system for checking of notes and homework. It is up to departments as to whether the work should be marked; it should not place an extra burden on teachers but the completed work could form part of ongoing formative assessment and take the place of e.g. a class based activity, in which case it should be marked and checked in-line with section 6 above. Due to its unsupervised nature, the 'ninth hour' should never be used for summative assessment purposes (unless ad hoc supervision is possible). There is no expectation that the teacher should 'check-in' or be present or available to students during this time.

Support

Homework Club runs in the Library after school Monday to Thursday, for an hour, to provide students with a space to work independently. In addition, subject specialist support clinics which are run either by teachers or Subject Ambassadors, usually at lunchtime, can be attended by students on a voluntary basis. These can be found on our website under Learning > Clubs and Clinics. HODs and teachers should refer to the [Buddies & Clinics Protocol](#) for further guidance.

Incentives

Students should be praised for their attitude and effort, making sure the emphasis is about their process and input rather than solely celebrating an outcome (e.g. a high mark in a test). Merits are awarded in line with the School values. Further detail about how each value and how they might manifest in different subjects can be found [here](#).

Sanctions

Students are rarely asked to complete a task for the next day and so the expectation is for a student to

seek support ahead of the homework deadline if they do not understand the task or require support with it. This support could be from a teacher, parent, peer or Student Ambassador/Mentor; Ambassadors/Mentors run lunchtime clinics or may be directed to work with a student during the school day. When homework is not completed, the class teacher should discuss the absence of homework with the student and place a homework mark on SIMS/Edulink. The expectation is that the student catches up on the missed homework.

Responsibilities

The role of the student is to:

- Regularly check and engage with their subject Google Classrooms and record any extra instructions or details given in class
- Inform the class teacher of any difficulties before the deadline
- Ensure that homework is completed independently (unless instructed otherwise) and handed in on time
- Attempt all of the set work and to give their best within the homework time allocated for their year group
- View homework as further learning and not as a task that simply needs to be completed
- If they have been absent, find out what homework they have missed from a student in their class or via the relevant Google Classroom or Google Site
- Seek further clarification from the teacher about missed homework (and class work) if they have already completed the step above and still have queries
- Be aware of the different types of feedback they might receive and engage with it fully.

The role of the form tutor is to keep an eye on Homework marks awarded, check in with students if they are given a mark and refer on to HoY or SEND if needed.

The class teacher controls the direction of homework and the nature of tasks undertaken following the guidance provided by the department schemes of work. The role of the class teacher is to:

- Set all homework tasks on Google Classroom and a set due date and time, considering the relevant homework timetables and department SOW
- Give full and comprehensive instructions
- Respond to homework in accordance with section 6 above
- Provide help and support as appropriate
- Follow the procedures in the Staff Handbook regarding allocating homework marks on SIMS/Edulink
- Follow the procedure as set out on the Academic Intervention Timeline where there are ongoing concerns or issues.

8. Student Use of AI - Classwork and Homework

Staff should refer to the Staff IT Acceptable Use policy to understand its application for both classwork and homework.

At school, we have carefully selected platforms which include AI components and appropriate guardrails for safe pupil use (see the AI RAG Spreadsheet for a detailed list of approved tools). Sixth Form students have access to Gemini Teen. Students are taught about AI in L4L and Computing lessons, but we encourage all staff to explore AI based activities with their classes to support students to understand the risks and opportunities of AI within subject-specific domains.

Students should only use generative AI tools for class or homework when:

- a teacher sets a task and clearly states that students may make use of an AI tool should they wish
- a teacher sets a task explicitly instructing students to use an AI tool. They must be sure all students have equal access to the tool; if uncertain, then the use of AI should be made optional and an alternative, non-AI method should be suggested

When completing a task using AI, students should follow the principles outlined in the AHS [AI Guide for Students](#). Clear scaffolding and guidance should be provided by the teacher to ensure the students understand how to use the AI tool effectively, responsibly and safely. When presenting their work, students should identify what AI application they used and the controls/prompts they gave it. This will allow the teacher to evaluate how extensive the use of AI was and how competently the student controlled it. The text generated by the AI should be included for evaluation.

Teachers should ensure that they have effective means of judging what 'the normal style of work' looks like for each of their students, for example through setting frequent in-class assignments where the teacher can monitor that work is the student's own, or through leading in-class discussions to check student understanding. Teachers should carefully consider the types of homework they set, in the knowledge that students will most likely be able to access AI at home.

Teachers and students should take particular care when **classwork or** homework relates to non-examined assessment tasks (NEA). JCQ has strict guidance surrounding AI misuse and plagiarism and it is essential that students and teachers are aware of the School's NEA policy which can be found on our website.

Where the misuse of AI is suspected, consider using an automated detection program such as GPTZero (<https://gptzero.me/>). N.B. these checking sites are not 100% reliable so should be only used as part of a holistic approach to considering the authenticity of students' work.

Where there has been clear misuse of AI towards a homework or classwork task, teachers should discuss their concerns with the relevant HOD, allocate the student a behaviour mark according to the behaviour matrix (if appropriate), and inform the parents.

9. Provision/Access to Lessons for Students when not attending School

Students are not expected to complete work while they are ill and off school; it is their responsibility to catch up on missed work in a reasonable amount of time (e.g. by checking the Google Classroom or Site or asking a classmate for their notes). Staff will not be asked to provide access to Google Meets for students who are not in school, except in exceptional circumstances and thus agreed at SLT level. In agreed exceptional circumstances, please follow these guidelines for Google Meets.

 Guidelines to staff on delivering online lessons to students who are at home

10. Monitoring and Evaluation of Teaching and Learning

The Senior Leadership Team will ensure there are programmes in place for monitoring student work and it is the Head of Department's responsibility to ensure those programmes are carried out effectively within their teams.

Routine **learning walks and** lesson observations are conducted by Heads of Departments, Line Managers and members of the Senior Leadership Team. Lessons are not graded but opportunities for praise will be sought and any improvements will be communicated. Biennial department QARs (see Appendix 2) comprise one part of the review process. These, alongside lesson observations, external exam data and wider T&L School foci (as outlined in the SIP) will inform the Team Improvement Plans for the following year.

Twice a year, students are required to complete a survey that asks questions surrounding the progress they are making in each of their subjects, the feedback they receive and the homework set. Heads of Departments are required to complete a monitoring form which encourages them or other Key Stage responsibility holders to discuss the findings of the survey and conduct further student focus groups or work scrutinies as appropriate. Feedback and marking are also monitored through QARs or following concerns raised about a particular subject/teacher.

Student progress is monitored through regular data drops. Regular data summits are conducted by the Leadership Team, supported by the relevant pastoral teams, to identify any students who are falling behind in their academic progress. Actions and interventions should be agreed and allocated to the appropriate team, e.g. Pastoral, SEND, Wellbeing, or relevant subject area.

It is the Head of Department's responsibility to analyse and monitor their team's data following each data drop to inform any areas of concern or interventions needed.

11. Digital Learning

All students have access to a digital device in lessons; digital learning is used by teachers to enhance classroom and home learning. All students must abide by the Acceptable Use of IT Student Policy.

12. Student work: online or on paper?

Each department should have an agreed system as to how students organise their work and their notes. HODs will decide whether the students use physical exercise books, booklets or folders or if they have the equivalent online. Depending on the year group, the teacher may give the students an element of choice as to how they prefer to work and take notes; however, this must be part of any agreed departmental system. Teachers should explain the agreed departmental system of note/work-organisation to students, whether that is digitally, handwritten or a blend of the two. This should happen during the first week of teaching in September and should be monitored by the teacher through regular checks over the course of the year.

Departments are encouraged to integrate regular opportunities for students to engage in sustained writing by hand. This is crucial for building stamina in writing, a skill particularly important for a range of different subjects across the school in exams. Activities could include: 10 minutes writing sprints; regular long-form writing tasks; note-taking methods that are handwritten, etc. Where a subject's GCSE or A Level paper includes extended writing tasks, it is recommended that, through the course, students complete most tasks of this nature by hand.

Where booklets are used, booklets should:

1. be used carefully alongside other planned activities, to lighten cognitive load, increase lesson pace and ensure students spend quality time on activities that stretch them to think critically and creatively
2. follow a logical sequence. Material should be broken into manageable chunks and put in an order that makes sense and prevents the students from having work to do based on material they have not been taught or to have to make too many cognitive jumps at once
3. help promote effective note-taking. The booklets should provide students with a structure for their notes so that they are accurate, meaningful and effective. A further benefit is that the students can then spend more time engaging in the lesson and thinking about what the teacher is saying

Appendix 1:

Questions to support curriculum design, implementation and evaluation

Intent and Curriculum Design

- What is the intent of our subject curriculum, and how is this communicated to students?
- Why have we included the content we have chosen, over other content?
- How does our curriculum allow students to get better at our subject?
- What is the best pedagogy to deliver our curriculum?
- What residual knowledge would you expect students to have by the end of Year 7, Key Stage 3, Year 10, etc.?
- What reference points will we include that will allow students to tackle forthcoming topics and concepts?
- What non-topic knowledge is required, and when?
- Are there disparities in students' experiences due to socioeconomic factors?
- How and when will we introduce it?
- When will students revisit x, and how will we ensure students are ready for this? Is learning appropriately sequenced?
- What curricular barriers exist in our subject? How will we support students to overcome them?
- How will students develop their language and vocabulary (spoken and written) and increase their reading competency?
- Do we need any support or advice from the SENDCo or PP Lead in our curriculum planning?

Implementation

- How do we make sure all students, including disadvantaged & SEND, are secure in their knowledge throughout your curriculum?
- How will gaps in learning be quickly identified and effectively addressed?
- If a sensitive topic is coming up, have students been given notice? Who will do so?
- Is any staff CPD needed to ensure teachers have the appropriate expertise?
- How will staff make best use of the Core Expectations to ensure quality TYL for *all* pupils, including disadvantaged & SEND, in our subject?
- Do staff need any support or advice from the SENDCo or PP Lead to support students effectively?

Impact & Evaluation

- Are all students, including disadvantaged & SEND, ready for their next stage? Do they have the appropriate foundational knowledge and skills and are these reflected in their responses and work?
- How will curriculum leads gain an informed understanding of the quality of curriculum & teaching and how well students have learnt what was intended?
- Do *all* pupils, including disadvantaged & SEND, achieve well and make suitable progress from their starting points and is this consistently reflected in results? Do they develop detailed knowledge and skills and produce high quality work across the curriculum?
- Do all staff use assessment effectively to inform & adapt their teaching to address gaps? How do we know this?
- Do all staff understand the importance of high quality teaching adaptations? Are the Core Expectations used consistently well across the department? How do we know this?
- How and when will we use quantitative and qualitative data to monitor student progress?
- How and when will we use the information above to make decisions about how our curriculum and teaching should adapt and evolve?

Appendix 2:

Department QARs (Quality Assurance Reviews)

1. Principles

- 1.1. The aims of the evaluation process are to improve subject processes, enhance learning and attainment and to spread good practice across the school
- 1.2. Subjects are evaluated biennially. The Senior Leadership Team work with subject leaders to conduct self-evaluations
- 1.3. Evaluations are led by a member of the Senior Leadership Team and assisted by a Head of Department acting as a critical friend. New subject leaders to the process will work in collaboration with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- 1.4. Once the provisional report is published a full subject meeting is held to discuss the findings

2. Characteristically, evaluations will use the following methods and data sources:

- 3.1. Analysis of examination data
- 3.2. Lesson observations
- 3.3. Student questionnaires
- 3.4. Learning samples
- 3.5. Meetings with students and department staff
- 3.6. Such other evidence as may be deemed appropriate such as subject handbooks, improvement plans and parental questionnaires

4. Outcomes The conclusion of the report will identify:

- 4.1 the strengths of the subject, recognising areas of good practice
- 4.2 the areas for development.

The HOD will discuss the findings with their line manager and identify appropriate actions.