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Academy

Secondary Teaching and Learning Policy

We have high expectations for learning and behaviour. We know all our pupils can achieve and that they will meet whatever expectations we set for them.

At AJK, we use every interaction with pupils to reinforce our belief in them as a learner; to reinforce our belief in learning as key to their future and to show that their future success and happiness is our priority. Every interaction with a pupil is an opportunity to convey the highest expectations and the core belief that every child, whatever their starting point, can succeed in education and can behave appropriately in a variety of formal and informal situations. We do 'whatever it takes' for our pupils to achieve the challenging targets that we set for them and the ones they set for themselves. As a result, our pupils develop the same attitude for themselves and others.

High expectations are delivered in every aspect of a great teachers work. For instance through the target setting process, through setting challenging learning objectives and supporting every child to achieve those; through using speaking and listening techniques to ensure that every answer in a classroom discussion uses full sentences; through supporting every pupil to play an active part in every lesson and ensuring that no child opts out of their learning. At AJK, we notice when any pupil falls short of achieving the expected outcomes and do what it takes to address learning gaps, ensuring they are able to meet those expectations.

We build positive relationships. All our learners are individuals and we want their particular learning needs to be met within a supportive, warm and happy environment.

At AJK, we build positive relationships with pupils so that they feel safe, cared for and believed in. These positive relationships develop a welcoming, secure environment, where learning and teaching is effective and enjoyable. Great teachers know that they are role models to their pupils. We model what successful adults do, say and how they relate to others. We inspire pupils to excel by always demonstrating a passion for and the importance of what is being taught alongside the core belief that every child can learn it. At AJK, we build positive relationships with pupils by demonstrating a growth mindset and immovable belief in their potential. We know each of our pupils as individuals, welcome them into the lesson and support them to find joy in their learning.

We plan purposefully. This ensures that all learning experiences are coherent and feed into longer term progress for all.

At AJK, curriculum plans demonstrate how pupils make progress over a year and ensure they achieve the end of key stage targets They also show how this builds into the bigger picture of their learning, both beyond the curriculum, across the curriculum and across key stages. The schemes of work outline the learning objectives, tasks and assessment opportunities in a unit of work. Curriculum plans and schemes of work are developed by leaders within the department or by teachers that have been trained how to plan schemes. These plans are adapted for each teaching group in order to support rapid progress at all

levels. They include quality questions and suggestions for differentiation. Collaborative planning meetings support teachers to plan for their groups and individual learners. We put a large emphasis on planning the facilitation within the lesson.

We embed clear routines. This ensures that there is no loss to learning and creates an orderly, safe, purposeful environment in which pupils can be confident to participate and engaged without distraction.

At AJK we plan, teach and reinforce our routines to ensure that we can challenge and engage our pupils effectively in the learning we have planned. We appreciate that getting these routines right requires significant upfront investment i.e. time well-spent teaching the pupils the routine and embedding it. We also recognise that routines need to be maintained regularly and followed consistently. Expectations need to be practised and reaffirmed so that performance remains sharp. Great routines ensure that every learning minute counts, they create tight and purposeful transitions and create the structures and boundaries within which pupils can become increasingly independent learners and lessons can be creative and varied.

We create the right climate for learning. Classrooms need to be purposeful and orderly if great learning is going to take place.

At AJK, we have a relentless focus on learning. We will never accept behaviour that compromises this. We use a range of techniques to prevent poor behaviour from ever disrupting the sanctity of learning and to manage it on the few occasions it does. We have clear behaviour systems that all AJK staff follow consistently. Our teachers teach their pupils how to behave in each new situation they encounter and this is codified in our What to Dos. We use the consequence and rewards systems effectively but do not over-rely on it because we have control over the class i.e. the pupils choose to do what the teacher asks them to do. In fact the pupils behave because they believe they can and they want to. Our teachers achieve this through a range of techniques including being positive role models, conveying the right key messages and by deliberately creating a strong classroom culture. We do not discuss behaviour in the classroom. The check system ensures that when pupils make mistakes, this does not impact on other learners and is dealt with swiftly to minimise impact on their own progress that lesson.

We teach well-paced lessons. This gives pupils a sense of progress and change through a lesson; a sense of purposefulness that drives effective learning.

At AJK, we have more time for learning and many of our learning sessions are longer too. This requires teachers to plan pacy lessons, using each minute to further pupil progress. To support this, we always ensure a prompt start to the lesson so that from the moment the pupil enters the classroom they know that every minute counts. Pupils at AJK are greeted at the door and enter silently to begin a 'Do Now' activity. The chunking of learning makes it easier to ensure that pupils are making rapid progress and therefore, teachers at AJK follow a four part lesson structure and ensure learning is maximised by using I-we-you to develop

pupils understanding. Our lessons give pupils the time to explore their learning but always remain purposeful. Pace does not necessarily mean speeding up the teaching. Often great teachers chose to spend more time on a particular area of content to ensure every pupil masters the objective. However they use a range of techniques to make the pupils feel like they are moving through the content swiftly. At AJK, we are always checking the progress of our pupils to slow that pace down when needed and move on when required.

Teacher led whole class and group teaching. When great teachers question skilfully, model learning, explain clearly and present new ideas and concepts effectively, every pupil is able to make more progress.

At AJK, we know that we need to use a range of techniques to structure effective classroom discussion. Our planning and intervention throughout a lesson effectively scaffolds and differentiates the learning. We use these skills to engage every pupil in the learning. We do not shy away from the fact that the teacher standing at the front of the class and teaching is a critical element of the learning process. But we use this time to support pupil understand and are continuously assessing how this understanding is developing. Teacher led discussion and teacher explanation use skilful questioning, modelling and clear explanation to support pupil progress. Great teachers know when to use these skills to introduce new material, engage more pupils in the learning process, fix mistakes, stretch and check for understanding. We also know that it is important that pupils are actively engaging with teacher-led explanation and taking notes that they can refer back to when they need to. Therefore, we will teach our pupils how to do this.

We assess rigorously and respond appropriately. For pupils to make significant progress their teachers need to know where they are and what they need to do to reach and exceed their targets.

The primary purpose of assessment is to improve learning. At AJK, our teachers plan and respond to the outcome of assessment deliberately. We plan how we will check that objectives have been met into our scheme of work and lesson planning. This is as much the case for end of term assessment as it is for a plenary activity half way through or at the end of a lesson. We think carefully about how progress can be demonstrated and where the most pertinent moments for feedback fall. We are responsive to what is happening within a lesson and how pupil understanding is developing and are able to adapt our teaching to take account of this. Throughout a topic, we will plan what we will mark, when and how we will feedback. Our teachers know that if pupils are going to make significant progress both they and their pupils need to know where they are in their learning and what they need to do to reach and exceed their targets. At AJK, teachers use a range of techniques to feedback the outcome of assessment to pupils and to make sure that pupils respond accordingly. We always follow formal assessment points with feedback lessons and any feedback we give is specific and can be acted upon by pupils to make immediate improvements. Formative marking, teacher feedback, pupil and peer assessment as well as effective classroom discussion are just some of the techniques that great teachers use. After each assessment point, we write class summaries in which whole class misconceptions and next steps are

identified so that they can be built into planning. This is also where strategies for individual pupils are planned.

We reflect on our practice and continually seek to improve. At AJK, we want to be better teachers so that our pupils can be better learners. As a community we engage in regular and meaningful practice, reflection, focused discussion and training to challenge ourselves and support each other to improve.

Professional development for AJK teachers is a formative process. We will ensure that all teachers know what their strengths are and what they need to do to improve. By describing the techniques that great teacher's use and focusing our training around the development of those techniques all teachers are given the opportunity to become great at what they do. Because we are all clear on what great teachers do, we are able to support each other – identifying excellent practice and working together to develop weaker practice. We follow an instructional leadership model of improvement and therefore all teachers receive feedback on their teaching weekly. As coaches will always give feedback that can be acted upon immediately to make improvements and as teachers we will always act on this feedback that, seeking advice if we are struggling to make the required changes. We will also reflect on our planning as teams. Every topic will be reviewed after assessment points and schemes of work will be improved to take into account what worked well and what didn't. The improvements will be written into the schemes of work for implementation the following year.