



# Teaching and Learning Policy

**Ratified by Governors:**

**September 2026**

**To be Reviewed:**

**September 2027**

## **Rationale**

### **Teaching and Learning at Marden High School ensures that:**

1. High quality classroom practice and effective learning experiences for children underpins everything we do at Marden High School.
2. All students are able to access high quality learning experiences that build effectively upon prior knowledge and attainment.
3. Formative assessment ensures that knowledge and understanding are checked at key times to ensure appropriate challenge and support.
4. Teachers access high-quality reading materials, collaborate, and reflect in order to sustain effective professional development.
5. The curriculum is challenging and rewarding for all students.

## **Statement of Intent**

### **A student's experience of teaching and learning will:**

- Be appropriate to their individual learning needs and will build on prior knowledge.
- Provide them with the opportunity to make progress and grow in confidence.
- Encourage students to develop their interests, learn about new and exciting ideas, and find new concepts to be passionate about.
- Allow students to express their opinions, explore new knowledge, and collaborate with other learners.
- Instil effective learning habits and attitudes for effective lifelong learning.

### **Staff will:**

- Ensure that teaching is inclusive so that all students can thrive and progress.
- Provide challenging and supportive learning experiences based on effective and systematic assessment and clear and timely feedback.
- Support and challenge students to achieve their best.
- Provide high-quality, relevant, interactive, and stimulating lessons.
- Encourage regular and meaningful home learning.
- Provide opportunities and guidance to develop literacy, numeracy, CEIAG, resilience and other skills necessary for life-long learners to thrive.
- Provide high-quality instructive feedback that recognises effective learning and develops understanding.
- Work collaboratively to share practice and offer critical support to help develop practice.

- Evaluate and reflect (often collaboratively) on the impact of teaching so that progress is sustained in teaching across the school.
- Be curious about the development of professional behaviours through engagement with high-quality reading materials, educational research and challenging professional dialogue.

### **Students will:**

- Demonstrate positive and thoughtful learning behaviours and interact positively in all lessons.
- Support each other (and teachers) to ensure a productive and meaningful learning environment.
- Take an active part in learning within and beyond the classroom.
- Respond positively to feedback and recognise the importance of challenging work in the development of knowledge.
- Rise to challenges and work collaboratively.

### **Procedure**

The Lesson Design Framework provides guidance and key questions for lesson planning. In planning, teachers recognise the need to manage cognitive load, remove unnecessary barriers to learning whilst preserving appropriate challenge. All lessons should include opportunities to check for understanding at key moments in the lesson so that teachers can respond to support learning and progress. Students should also experience opportunities to retrieve prior knowledge through regular low-stakes assessments in order to sustain knowledge over time.

### **Planning and Preparation**

- Teachers should plan lessons that allow all students to progress in their learning based on accurate and valid assessment information (*checks for understanding*, retrieval practice, formative assessment, and key assessed tasks).
- The Lesson Design Framework is not a lesson template but a set of key questions and reminders to support effective planning. Teachers should preserve the important thinking and challenge within the curriculum, consider predictable barriers to learning and remove unnecessary barriers so that students can access the curriculum.

- Lesson planning is expected for every lesson. This can be recorded in planning documents (such as the powerpoint or presentation) or the teacher planner. Medium term planning (MTP) illustrates how the learning fits in with the broader curriculum.
- Lesson plans and slide shows must be shared with Student Support Assistants (SSAs) so that effective and informed support can be provided.
- Lesson planning must incorporate the deployment of any Student Support Assistants (SSAs) during the lesson to maximise inclusion of all students .
- One learning objective will be set as the focus for the lesson. The activities in the lessons should clearly link to this objective, build on prior knowledge and learning, as well as develop an effective understanding of key vocabulary.
- Learning objectives, success criteria and the relevance of the learning are made explicit to students as appropriate.
- Check for understanding tasks are planned and administered at crucial points during the lesson to ensure that students are accessing the learning. Misunderstandings are identified and addressed effectively.
- The use of resources, including ICT, must be carefully planned to enhance learning.
- Collaborative planning should occur in the development of resources such as hinge questions and exit tickets so that these questions have maximum impact.

## **Teaching**

- Teachers should have an in-depth knowledge of the scheme of work (MTP) and exam specification they are working to.
- Teaching makes use of assessment data and classroom strategies to ensure that all students build upon prior knowledge.
- *Checks for understanding* allow the teacher to evaluate the quality of the learning experience based on the objective assessment information so that subsequent planning reflects the learning needs of the students in the class.
- Teachers will reflect on their practice in order to develop further expertise.
- Opportunities for open professional dialogue are provided through CPD in order to share good practice and support the development of expertise.

## **Assessment and Feedback**

- Regular opportunities are taken by teachers to gauge the level of understanding in each lesson; how do we know what students have learned? This allows for teachers to be responsive in a timely manner.
- Assessment opportunities are planned for the medium and long-term to give opportunities for students to receive and act upon formative feedback. Assessment should focus on important knowledge and thinking and should be proportionate to its purpose.
- Feedback should provide clear guidance for students on how work can be improved, effecting a learning dialogue that helps students to learn and make progress. Developmental practice might also be incorporated to secure learning.
- Feedback gathered by the teacher from assessment activities is used in subsequent planning. Teachers should use the information gained from checks for understanding, independent practice and key assessments to identify misconceptions, gaps in knowledge and appropriate next steps.
- Thoughtful questioning is used with intent and purpose to develop and share understanding as well as identify and address misconceptions. Teachers should provide thinking time and use questioning and participation routines to gather evidence of learning from all students.
- All marking should allow the teacher to assess understanding and provide the student with an opportunity to develop knowledge and skills. Classroom activities therefore should be designed so that they are focussed allowing students to *think* and apply knowledge.

## Home Learning

- Meaningful homework is issued regularly.
- All homework will be set on Google classroom with a due date.
- Tasks for homework are consolidatory and short in nature. They are challenging, promote *thinking*, as opposed to time-consuming 'busy-work'.
- Time in lessons will be allocated to homework follow-up and discussion and students should see the connection between independent home study and the work taking place in the classroom.

## Differentiation

- Teachers ensure that any barriers to learning are addressed and minimised so that all students have the best possible chance of accessing learning. This is referred to as 'cutting the curb' and ensures that access is maximised for all learners. Reasonable adjustments are then additionally made to support specific learning needs.
- In order to differentiate effectively, careful planning should allow teachers to regularly gauge the progress of students throughout the lesson. This will allow for all levels of progress and attainment to be recognised and supported.

- Teaching will be responsive so that misconceptions and knowledge gaps can be addressed in a timely manner and differentiated support provided and linked to core learning for each lesson.
- Teachers should take advantage of assessment data in order to plan to suit the needs and attainment of students (as well as address areas of weakness in learning).
- Teachers should be aware of SEND information and consider this carefully in order to support learning needs.
- Cognitive load should be carefully managed in order to allow students to focus on the key learning in each lesson and not be impacted by extraneous cognitive load (distractions that should be minimised).
- Class seating and grouping for learning may be used to facilitate inclusion in the classroom.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The quality of teaching and learning will be monitored and evaluated by senior and middle leadership. This will be done by learning walks, work sampling and student voice. The focus of this monitoring is to establish the prevalence of valuable teaching practice across the school and support teacher development. Specifically, teaching should include regular and effective *checks for understanding* and suitable responsive support. There will also be opportunities for reflection as part of the CPD programme and calendared windows to share best practice.

## **Early Career Teachers (ECTs)**

ECTs follow the 2-year ECT Programme with Ambition Institute and through Three Rivers Teaching School Hub. The ECT provision is designed to build upon the professional development experienced during Initial Teacher Training. Year 1 ECTs have 1 hour of protected time per week to meet with mentors while ECTs in their second year have 1 hour per fortnight to meet with Mentors. This time can be used as appropriate to carry out lesson 'drop-in' (informal observations) and meetings. Informal, drop-in style observations tackle place weekly and formal observations (with the Mentor and the Inductions Tutor) take place half-termly. ECT reports are written half-termly.