

## Rationale

'Our aspiration is to enable all children to develop their capacities as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to society.'  
A Curriculum for Excellence: The Curriculum Review Group' (2004).

Learning and Teaching is key to ensuring schools meet the needs of their pupils. Alva Academy's policy for learning and teaching reflects the Scottish Executives aims for "a curriculum for excellence" and Clackmannanshire Councils' policy for Effective Learning and Teaching.

## Purpose

The purpose of a learning and teaching policy is to provide a framework for engaging young people in quality learning activities and to engender a culture focused on success. We need to provide pupils with a learning environment which is positive, supportive and stimulating and one which encourages them to take an active part in their learning.

## Principles

It is through learning and teaching that the main aims of the school can be realised. Staff need to maintain the highest possible standards of delivery in order to create successful learners. Teachers need to be effective leaders in the classroom as it is only through their commitment and ability that we can enhance the quality of learning, fulfil students potential and raise attainment and achievement.

A successful Learning and Teaching policy hinges on staff being aware that *how* we teach is as important as *what* we teach. We have to be able to engage with learners in a positive manner, to encourage pupils to take more risks and make them aware right from the beginning that there is often more than one answer to a problem. Good teaching is flexible. It allows people to make mistakes because mistakes are an essential part of learning and teaching.

It is essential we address the basic concepts that underpin our teaching practices and to encourage the development of thinking skills that support learning in all areas of the curriculum. Success in our learning and teaching is evident through improved confidence, ambition and self esteem in our learners **and** teachers.

## **Management**

A successful policy will provide clear aims, embed quality assurance, review and evaluate by

- recognising strengths
- identifying what is to be maintained
- identifying areas for improvement
- setting targets

The implementation of the policy will be managed by SMT. SMT will work with their Faculty Departments to ensure that the policy impacts on the work of the department through the school Improvement Plan, Department Improvement plans and also through individual professional reviews.

Procedures will be reviewed regularly through discussion at department meetings. Faculty Heads will be responsible for the ongoing review, support and evaluation of learning and teaching in their department.

The classroom observation process will allow staff to share good practice in terms of effective learning and teaching

## **Procedures**

Guidelines on the following essential areas of learning and teaching are provided in the appendices:

Context for learning

Promoting learning

Use of ICT

Assessment

Climate, ethos, relationships

Inclusion

Information is also provided on:

Taking account of good practice/research

Partnerships in learning

Transitions/lifelong learning

## Resources

Each department will be equipped with appropriate resources. Specialist resources will be stored appropriately and regularly audited by the Faculty PT. Staff will consult with the Faculty PT when requesting specialist materials. The Faculty PT will ensure that consumable resources are renewed. Pupils will be taught how to use all resources correctly and safely, with care and respect, and with regard for Health and Safety. Recycling will be encouraged whenever possible. All pupils will have equality of access to resources appropriate to their needs.

## Classroom Management

Teacher plans/programmes of work  
Range of appropriate teaching approaches  
Choice of appropriate tasks/activities/resources  
ICT to support learning  
Wall displays  
Record keeping  
Specialist resources  
Classroom environment/accommodation

} Liaison with Pupil Support team as appropriate

## Strategies

Time for classroom observation/feedback  
Staff development opportunities –  
- effective learning and teaching  
- curriculum development  
- classroom management  
Questioning strategies handout  
Co-operative learning  
Differentiation  
Use of audio/visual equipment  
In-service training (ref. staff resource area)  
Use of ICT  
Time for joint planning as appropriate

## Additional Support

Pupil Support team – support/consultancy  
Pupil Support folder (available on staff common)  
Supported Study programme  
Course choice process  
Homework clubs  
Study skills techniques (PSE programme)  
Development Fund (to enhance Department resources)  
Easter revision programme

## **Monitoring/Evaluating/Reporting**

**T** – Class teachers will monitor pupil progress including the identification of additional support needs. This will involve setting targets and monitoring progress.

**PT** – Faculty Heads/Principal Teachers will monitor the work of Departments. (As detailed below) Pupil Support staff will monitor individual pupil progress in conjunction with class teachers.

**SMT** – SMT will periodically monitor Department/ year group/class progress.

QIOs will monitor learning and teaching in a sample of subjects across the Council using relevant QIs (once per year).

HMle as part of their programme of school inspections

As a staff and as individuals we can reflect on our practice using a number of methods.

## **Forms of monitoring/evaluating**

Use of Department meetings

Q1 3.1 – 3.6 a structured way for individuals, departments or the whole school to evaluate effective learning and teaching.

Assessment procedures

Reporting to parents

Feedback from parents (formal and informal)

Monitoring/tracking pupil progress

- teacher
- Faculty PT (including analysis of Department performance and its implications for learning and teaching).
- PT Pupil Support and Pupil Support team
- DHT

Classroom observations (SMT, PT, Peer) observations and feedback seen as an excellent way to share good practice.

Progress checks (Dept/year/groups)

Monitor workbooks/jotters – moderation (internal and external)

SQA results analysis

Departments sharing good practice

Pupil feedback on courses (formal and informal)

QA Submissions

Transforming learning – a system of formal pupil feedback

SPINVIP

Framework for intervention

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## Appendix A

### CONTEXT OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

The aim of school policy on teaching and learning should be to invest in a wide ranging choice of provision and service. In the context of teaching and learning the diverse experience and backgrounds which staff and pupils bring to the school should be fully utilised.

The curriculum, therefore, will cater for the needs of **all** pupils, regardless of their race, religion, age, aptitude, physical or social circumstances.

All pupils should be encouraged to have aspirations for their future. The pursuit of these aspirations motivates the pupils and will encourage engagement in class lessons, course studies, and whole school activities.

In order to meet pupil aspirations a range of courses should be provided. Each course will be in accordance with national guidelines and allow each child to progress in terms of achievement towards their goals of the academic and vocational qualifications required for further education and employment.

The context of teaching and learning should ensure that there will be:

- Dialogue between teachers, pupils and peers that promotes a positive attitude to learning, respect for each contributor and enhances self esteem and confidence.
- Clearly defined learning outcomes in each lesson which are explained to pupils - and suited to their ability, aptitude and potential.
- Clear and concise instructions and explanations which are understood by all pupils.
- Lessons that utilise pupils' experiences and are relevant to their lives with regard to their needs and aspirations.
- Consistency of practice across all sectors of pupils - regardless of their ability, aptitude, physical or social circumstances.
- Regular review of pupils' progress against clearly defined learning outcomes suited to their individual needs.
- A coordinated cross circular approach to lessons and course work across subjects in order to reinforce and consolidate information and skills.
- Homework will be relevant to the work in class - and differentiated so that it is appropriate to each pupil.
- Consistent procedures in respect of placement decisions and allocation of resources. (Staged Intervention)
- Matching of pupils' needs with relevant support interventions, course work and appropriate class/group placements.
- Maximum efficiency of the provision of support strategies.
- Appropriate involvement of teaching and support staff.

**Outcome**

A broad, balanced and suitably differentiated curriculum in support of all pupils. This will take account of pupils' academic, practical and vocational aptitudes and preferences.

**QIs**

1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.5 and 5.1

## Appendix B

### PROMOTING LEARNING

Promoting learning is the overarching goal of education and it depends on effective teaching. Successful learners are actively engaged in the learning process; able to take responsibility for their own learning and who maximise their potential. Students will not become effective learners unless their individual needs are met within a classroom climate where the ethos is positive, relationships are based on mutual respect and trust, expectations are high and achievement is celebrated.

For teaching to be effective and enterprising it should involve, as appropriate, a balance of:

- Whole class teaching
- Group work
- Cooperative learning
- One to one teaching
- Independent learning
- Formative Assessment
- Pupils taking responsibility
- Independent learning/research
- Defined outcomes
- Real and relevant to outside world
- Pupil evaluation

In the course of lessons teachers should apply a range of strategies including:

- Discussion
- Questioning – both varied and skilled
- Brainstorming/mind shower
- Previewing and reviewing work
- Providing opportunities for reflection
- Providing opportunities for reinforcement
- Practical work

Learning will only be effective when:

- There is a focus on teaching understanding not merely knowledge of content.
- Students are encouraged to make connections in their learning
- There is careful planning at individual, departmental/faculty and whole school levels.
- Teaching takes account of prior learning and of future development
- Teaching and learning takes account of different learning styles, multiple intelligences and individual needs.
- Assessment is both summative and formative and, along with reporting, accurately measures progress and identifies next steps in learning with clear targets set and action plans devised.
- High expectations of what they can achieve are conveyed to students and they are encouraged to be positive thinkers and “can do” culture is fostered.
- Students’ contributions are encouraged and valued.
- Students are challenged and encouraged to take responsibility for their learning.
- Understanding goals and learning outcomes are explicit and shared.
- The classroom environment is conducive to learning.
- Materials and resources are of a high quality and are appropriate to individual needs.

In order to achieve this the following are essential:



- Quality staff development
- The sharing of good practice and where possible, team teaching.
- Effective partnerships
- Effective monitoring and evaluation of learning and teaching
- Resources to facilitate effective learning and teaching

#### Roles and Responsibilities

##### 1. Classroom Teacher

- To ensure that lessons meet the criteria for successful learning and teaching.

##### 2. Faculty PT

- To monitor and evaluate learning and teaching across the Faculty to ensure the criteria are being met and that there is consistency across Departments.
- To ensure their department courses and units meet pupil needs.

##### 3. SMT

- To monitor and evaluate learning and teaching across the school.

<b>Outcome</b>
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All staff have an awareness and understanding of the wide range of learning styles and provide an effective balance of activities which takes account of these.

<b>QIs</b>
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1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 4.7 and 5.1

## Appendix C

### INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

ICT – generally regarded as the application of computer information and telecommunications technology. Used in all areas of life at home and work, knowledge and skill in ICT will be required for all young people.

For effective use of ICT it will be important for all pupils and staff to develop confidence in their skills in ICT. The school will provide opportunities and the resources (within budgetary constrictions!) for this to take place.

ICT contributes to meeting the needs of staff and pupils in teaching and learning for the following reasons:

#### Learning

- Has the potential to support learning and teaching across the curriculum
- Encourages positive disposition towards learning.
- Enhances presentation of work.
- Assists problem solving and investigative teaching approaches.
- Allows communication and research facility (local and global)
- Allows access to expertise
- Assists collaboration and sharing of knowledge, ideas etc.
- Assists independence
- Develop communication skills
- Uses a medium with which pupils are comfortable with.

#### Teaching

- Assists lesson planning by allowing access to the world at large for information, explanation, situation and example.
- Quality presentation of lesson.
- Variety and alternative presentation of lesson.
- Assists with and enhances assessment, recording and reporting.
- Storing
- Motivation

#### Outcome

The quality of learning and teaching is enhanced through the provision and effective use of ICT in the classroom.

#### QIs

3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3

## Appendix D

### ASSESSMENT

Assessment is an integral component of any learning and teaching policy. Through assessment we can identify pupils and staff development needs and plan for improvement thereby assuring quality of provision throughout departments and the school.

Assessment as part of learning and teaching can be broken down into three main areas:

- **Learners need to know where they are going and what they have to do to get there**

This involves teachers asking the right type of questions, involving pupils in constructive dialogue and to engage them more frequently in thinking about what they are doing.

Questioning and resulting dialogue corrects misconceptions and leads to reliable knowledge construction. Teachers should offer timely and regular feedback on the quality of work and mutually identify next steps.

- **Learners learn how to think and learn**

Pupils supported and encouraged to think for themselves become more resourceful and reflective. Pupils need to “know how” rather than simply retain chunks of information. “If learning is making sense of experience and thinking is how we learn, then improving children's thinking will help them make more sense of learning.” *Robert Fisher 1999*

This can take the form of group discussion based on prior learning and recent experiences and focus on how to overcome difficulties (set targets). In group discussion peer and self assessment should be encouraged and targets set.

- **Looking at evidence and evaluating**

Assessment information can be used in benchmarking sessions looking at coursework across year groups. It can be used to monitor the curriculum where staff can compare expectations and discuss/ observe standards. The sessions should focus on rigour, content and pace and lead to a revision of the curriculum which will impact positively on learning and teaching. These sessions are vital for quality assurance and are the basis for improvement within departments by identifying staff and pupil development needs

#### Outcome

- Formative assessment is an integral part of learning and teaching.
- Appropriate feedback motivates pupils.
- Summative assessment is used to confirm progress and set targets.
- Assessment for learning training is put into practice.

#### QIs

2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.4, 3.5, 4.6, 4.7 and 4.4

## Appendix E

### CLIMATE, ETHOS AND RELATIONSHIPS

In the course of their daily work the staff of Alva Academy will contribute to a positive ethos through:-

- Providing a fair, consistent and disciplined environment, in line with the school's Positive Behaviour Policy.
- Providing a calm, quiet and effective working environment at all times in which a child can achieve to the best of their ability.
- Providing a welcoming environment, in which mutual courtesy, kindness and respect are fostered.
- Developing links with the wider community.
- Providing the pupils with meaningful and purposeful tasks related to the SEED Guidelines and the school's own programmes of study.
- Valuing and celebrating pupils' success and achievements at different levels.
- Promoting a positive appreciation of the diversity of individuals and groups within the school.
- Promoting teacher/pupil relationships both positive and sensitive to individual needs.
- Involving the Pupil Council in policy making discussion where appropriate.
- Fostering positive links with parent/carers and encouraging an involvement in their child's education.

#### **Outcomes**

The reciprocal relationship between effective learning and teaching and good behaviour depends on the creation of a sustained positive climate and ethos, which in turn promotes positive behaviour.

#### **QIs**

4.2, 4.4, 5.1, 5.2 and 6.5

## Appendix F

### INCLUSION

Inclusion means the creation of a learning community which recognises, welcomes and values a diversity of abilities, interests, talents, backgrounds and needs. It involves maximising the participation of all children in mainstream education. An inclusive school culture has high expectations for all its pupils and individual achievements are valued without comparison. The school provides a positive model for an equal, tolerant and inclusive society.

Key features of inclusion:

- The term 'Additional Support Needs' refers to any child who faces barriers to learning in some contexts and requires additional support. Support may be required to overcome educational barriers that may be cognitive, social, emotional, physical, linguistic, family or care situations.
- Most needs can be met within the classroom through effective teaching and learning and through differentiation.
- While the class teacher has a central role in meeting pupil needs, additional support may be identified and met by specialist staff through the Staged Intervention Process.
- Staged Intervention is the process used for identifying, monitoring, addressing and assessing additional support needs. It is an inclusive, holistic approach involving pupils, parents, relevant staff and support services. It is a working action plan for the individual pupil.

#### Roles and Responsibilities

##### All staff

- Recognise the importance of the early identification of needs and how to address and support them. Refer to pupil support folder. Staged Intervention process.
- Ensure effective communication between all parties involved

##### Teachers

- Should seek to develop an understanding and expertise in relation to inclusive education.
- Are aware of their duties in relation to current legislation.
- Are aware of the individual needs of the pupils they teach and how to address these needs.
- Know how to access support from the variety of services that are available.
- Seek to have positive partnerships with parents, respect their rights and respond to their concerns.
- Are aware of strategies to support learning including differentiation, target setting, adaptation, personal learning planning, and multi-agency working.

##### SMT

- A member of SMT is responsible for promoting an inclusive learning environment.

Outcomes
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- All staff understand what makes an inclusive school.
- All staff have high expectation for all pupils.
- Staff understand the legislative framework of the Additional Support for Learning Act.
- A curriculum is promoted which values individual diversity. Programmes of work are designed to enable pupils to fully participate and progress across the curriculum.
- Learning and teaching experiences are appropriate to individual learning needs.

- All progress is monitored effectively; outcomes and curricular targets are identified.
- The Staged Intervention Framework is used for the early and ongoing identification and planning for meeting pupil needs.
- Positive partnerships with parents/carers and young people are valued.
- Where relevant there is a collaborative multi-agency approach to the assessment, planning and delivery of services.
- All school experiences and extra curricular activities are accessible to all pupils as far as practically or reasonably possible.

<b>QIs</b>
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1.1, 1.2, 3.1, 3.3, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, and 4.8

## Appendix G

### TAKING ACCOUNT OF RESEARCH/GOOD PRACTICE

All staff should take account of the findings of relevant and sound educational research and apply these in their policy and practice.

It is important that staff in Alva Academy is

- Provided with information regarding any relevant educational research which will have an impact on their teaching. Refer to staff resource area.
- Given opportunities for high quality staff development in Learning and Teaching
- Encouraged to reflect and evaluate their own good practice within their continuing professional development.
- Prepared to share identified good practice with colleagues.
- Encouraged to exchange this good practice during appropriate times, for example classroom observation.

#### **Outcome**

Departments regularly review and discuss their learning and teaching practice.

#### **QIs**

1.2, 6.6 and 7.1

## Appendix H

### PARTNERSHIP IN LEARNING

For learning and teaching to be effective:

- There has to be climate where a range of partnerships is fostered
- Staff have to recognise their role in working with others and are active in partnership working
- Staff are encouraged to develop positive working relationships with home

This can be achieved within the school by:

- Sharing practice within and across departments
- Maintaining and extending the school website and developing a learning and teaching section within it
- Facilitating neighbourhood opportunities for Departments to visit other Departments in other schools and networking opportunities for **all** staff
- Encouraging and supporting cross sector initiatives
- Identifying individuals and agencies within the community and beyond and engaging with them to identify how meaningful partnerships could be developed and sustained.

#### Outcome

All school staff are able to develop effective partnerships with colleagues, pupils, parents/carers and where appropriate external agencies.

#### QIs

3.6, 4.1, 4.5, 5.2 and 5.3



# Appendix I

## TRANSITIONS/LIFELONG LEARNING

At Alva Academy we aim to facilitate a smooth transition for P7 pupils into S1. Staff work collaboratively with our colleagues in primary and external agencies. We involve pupils and parents/carers in this process. There is an annual review of this programme.

Throughout S1-S6 pupils are given the opportunity to develop skills and attitudes necessary for lifelong learning. Pupils are encouraged to take an active part in their learning, developing independence and a sense of responsibility.

Pupils receive information and guidance on options beyond school. This is available through:

PSE

Careers Advisor

Open Days

Careers Library

Information evenings

Relevant websites

Transition planning where appropriate

Staff aim to:

- take account of prior learning and information from previous stages.
- record appropriate information required for effective transition.
- contribute to the development of skills and attitudes preparing pupils for the world of work or continuing education.

### Outcome

- All pupils will experience smooth transition from one stage of education to another to ensure progression.
- Pupils will develop the skills and attitudes necessary for lifelong learning.

### QIs

1.2, 3.3, 4.3 and 5.3