

REPORT TO: Education Committee

MEETING DATE: 16 June 2015

BY: Depute Chief Executive (Resources and People Services)

SUBJECT: Learning and Teaching Policy 2015

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To seek the approval of the Committee for the Learning and Teaching Policy 2015.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:
- i. Approve the Learning and Teaching Policy (Appendix 1).
 - ii. Authorise me to distribute the Learning and Teaching Policy to all educational establishments in East Lothian.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 This original policy was drafted in 2005 by the then Head of Education Don Ledingham.
- 3.2 The Scottish educational landscape has changed significantly since its publication and the Department's 3-18 Assessment and Reporting Group took the decision to review and update the policy in November 2014.
- 3.3 Consultation ran between December 2014 and January 2015.
- 3.4 The draft policy was presented to the Senior Management Education Board (SMEB) in December 2014. The draft policy was approved by the SMEB.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None

5 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and no negative impacts have been found.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial - Any additional expenditure will have to be met from existing budgets.

6.2 Personnel - None

6.3 Other - None

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Learning and Teaching Policy (Appendix 1).

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**East Lothian
Council**

Resources and People Services (Education)



LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY

MARCH 2015

EAST LoTHIAN COUNCIL LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY

Introduction

This policy is intended to have a positive impact upon the quality of the learning and teaching process in East Lothian. It should be read in conjunction with East Lothian's Quality Assurance Policy.

This policy is deliberately concise and focuses upon those elements of the learning and teaching process which will make the biggest difference to the quality of learning and teaching in our schools.

Schools should develop their own policy in line with this document, which may extend beyond these elements if so desired.

Implementation guidelines for schools are included as Appendix 1.

Rationale

- The key to a successful learning and teaching policy is the extent to which it has a positive impact upon the learning process in our schools.
- This framework articulates with the aims stated in the Department's Education Local Improvement Plan and Strategy (2014-2018), which in turn links with the Integrated Children's Services Plan.
- This framework adopts a learner focus by describing the entitlements and responsibilities of all learners (staff and pupils).
- All learners are entitled to experience these minimum expectations in our schools.

This framework is based upon three inter-connected principles:

- All learners should be treated with unconditional positive regard (see below)
- Learners need to be engaged for learning to take place
- The development of learning and teaching should be a collaborative enterprise

Definition of Unconditional Positive Regard:

- Unconditional – suspension of judgement about a person
- Positive – adoption of a positive perspective
- Regard – the outlook adopted towards another person

“Judge the deed, not the person”

The fundamental building blocks of good practice

All learners are entitled to expect that:

- intentions are shared in a lesson or group of lessons with reminders as appropriate
- they are provided with quality feedback
- lessons are summarised within learning sessions
- their learning is supported by the use of appropriate questioning techniques
- they are enabled and encouraged to make a full contribution
- they will be supported to gain independence in their learning
- the context for learning is regularly reinforced
- they are provided with advice about what to do next to further their learning
- they are provided with regular opportunities to give feedback about their learning experiences
- their feedback is used to modify, adapt and improve the learning process
- their learning is enhanced by appropriate use of digital technology

Presumptions about the learning environment

All learners are entitled to expect that their learning will take place in an environment:

- which is safe and stimulating for learning
- where their individual needs are taken into account
- where mutual trust and respect is encouraged among all learners
- which encourages learners to engage in their own learning and take responsibility for their learning

Presumptions about content

All learners are entitled to a clear line of skills development and to be provided with:

- learning opportunities which enable them to experience success
- opportunities which extend their understanding and competence
- content appropriate to their level of understanding and competence
- engaging and stimulating learning experiences
- a pace of learning which maintains and stimulates interest
- breadth, challenge and application

within a **progressive** and **coherent** framework.

Presumptions about rules, standards and conduct

Learners are entitled to expect to have:

- rules and expectations explained and reinforced
- rules and expectations consistently applied and upheld
- actions and decisions being explained
- equitable and fair treatment

Presumptions about learning experiences

Learners are entitled to expect to be:

- enabled to work and learn as individuals, pairs and groups
- encouraged to develop an understanding of themselves as learners
- enabled to investigate areas of personal interest
- supported to develop research skills
- encouraged to be creative and develop problem solving skills

Presumptions about digital literacy

Learners are entitled to expect to:

- have access to appropriate resources from the World Wide Web
- have best use made of their digital literacy
- be encouraged to engage in the learning process through digital opportunities
- be directed towards appropriate resources available on the World Wide Web

Presumptions about Learners' Responsibilities

Learners have a responsibility to:

- respond appropriately to being treated with unconditional positive regard
- have respect for the rights of others to learn
- accept the opportunity to become actively engaged in their own learning
- engage in feedback about their learning in a constructive manner
- work constructively with, and support, other learners

APPENDIX 1

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOLS

These guidelines describe how schools will be enabled to develop their own strategy to fulfil our aspirations about learning and teaching contained within the Learning and Teaching Policy.

OUR GOAL

To ENGAGE pupils in their learning with a view to developing the four capacities identified in Curriculum for Excellence:

- Responsible citizens;
- Effective contributors;
- Confident individuals;
- Successful learners

OUR APPROACH

We believe that schools can identify a range of entry points to engage teachers in developing their practice, in line with General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) Professional Standards. Examples of entry points might include: assessment frameworks, positive behaviour approaches, Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL), contribution to school improvements and developments. Each of these entry points can be equally effective in supporting teachers to fulfil our shared goals.

Characteristics of our approach:

- It is recognised that top down initiatives to develop learning and teaching have a limited impact;
- We believe that all teachers wish to continually seek to develop and improve their practice. We should not characterise teaching and learning initiatives as “fixing” a deficit in practice but see them as an enhancement to existing “good” practice;
- Schools will seek to develop a strategy which encourages and empowers teachers to be innovative with their practice;
- Schools will develop strategies which result in action and which have an identifiable positive impact upon the learning process;
- There is no single model for good practice; diversity can be accepted as long we can satisfy the entitlements identified within our Learning and Teaching Policy;

Our staff development programmes should be focused upon supporting Learning and Teaching Policy;

Gradual, collective and sustained progress in learning and teaching is preferable to sudden, individual and short-term activity;

Schools and clusters should attempt to create a “critical mass” within their schools which encourages and supports teachers to develop their practice;

School leaders need to prioritise and demonstrate an active commitment to developing teaching and learning.