



Teaching and Learning at Larches High School 2024-25

**Improving Relationships – Improving
Opportunities – Improving Life Chances**

September 2024

(to be reviewed September 2025)

Teaching and Learning

At Larches High School we expect consistency in certain aspects of classroom practice: classroom routines and certain teacher behaviours as linked to our Behaviour Policy.

We also recognise and value the varied individual experiences that our teaching staff have had and how this can be brought into our classrooms for our pupils.

We encourage variety, innovation, creativity and teaching strategies which enable our pupils to maximise their learning and make progress.

This guidance sets out the minimum expectations in terms of teaching and learning at Larches High School.

Not every child has an equal talent or an equal ability or an equal motivation, but every child has the right to develop their talent, their ability, their motivation” JFK

We recognise at Larches High School that our pupils are individuals and that “one size of education” does not fit all. Many of our pupils have not had a positive experience of education and it is our duty as teachers to re engage them with the learning process so that they can leave and go on to make positive lifelong contributions to society.

We as teaching staff

- Welcome individual differences and needs
- Value subject knowledge and its importance in inspiring and motivating our pupils
- Encourage risk taking, innovation, creativity and teaching strategies which engage our pupils and enable them to achieve
- Will engage in research around education pedagogy
- Recognise the importance of the different styles and personalities
- Will be consistent in behaviours, routines and expectations
- Will work hard to build positive and supportive working relationships with our pupils
- Will engage and challenge our pupils to achieve and make progress
- Will ensure that the learning environment is appropriate to individual pupil need, well presented, tidy and current.
- Will support colleagues to manage behaviour and learning as appropriate.

Expectations

Whilst encouraging creativity and innovations there are expectations of consistency and rigour which are necessary to maintain standards and secure high quality teaching and learning.

Teaching staff who find themselves without a class due to absence / school visit / onsite speaker should make themselves available to support on the corridors if required.

Classroom Routines

All pupils like routines as it makes them feel safe and they are clear on staff expectations of them. Effective classroom routines are at the heart of effective classroom and behaviour management without which learning is disrupted or hindered.

- All lessons will begin with the class being greeted at the door and welcomed into the classroom.
- All classroom equipment will be ready for pupils at the start of every lesson.
- Larches High School Behaviour Policy will be followed throughout the lesson and rewards and sanctions will be issued appropriately
- Pupils will be dismissed in an orderly manner at the end of the lesson

Teacher Behaviours

The different characters and personalities of our teachers make Larches High School a diverse place to learn and work. There are however certain behaviours which all great teachers display.

Improved Relationships – Improving Opportunities – Improved Life Chances

- Are kind and care about our pupils and show them respect
- Are firm but fair
- Use the Behaviour Policy and Rewards system consistently and fairly
- Have high expectations of all pupils in terms of behaviour, outcomes, work, progress, capability and presentation
- Exhibit professional standards of dress and appearance
- Know when to step back and allow pupils thinking time or to encourage and support independent learning
- Are self-aware and aware of the feelings of others
- Are patient and regulate their own emotions
- Are prepared to take risks
- Are learners themselves and actively contribute to the learning culture within the school
- Communicate effectively with learning support assistants and ensure they are used effectively within lessons to promote learning
- Set Homework tasks as appropriate which supports and extends learning
- Use effective questioning and assessment for learning strategies to check pupil progress, then adjust teaching to maximise learning.
- Use regular, rigorous assessment to reinforce learning and check pupils' understanding and progress
- Will give pupils' opportunities to engage in extended reading, extended pieces of writing and extended periods of listening and reading to enable them to practise and consolidate skills and learning
- Ensure that books are marked regularly following the Larches High School marking policy.
- Ensure that pupils receive regular feedback on their learning to help them improve; specific targets in their books, verbal feedback and whole class feedback
- Ensure that pupils are able to respond to the feedback given regularly

Lesson Delivery

Lessons will

- Develop knowledge and skills overtime
- Be planned and delivered to ensure that pupils knowledge is consistent, coherently and logically sequenced
- Engage and challenge all pupils and meet their individual learning needs
- Enable all pupils to make strong progress from their starting points
- Enable pupils to become confident learners who understand the key constructs which underpin the subject
- Use assessment to reinforce learning and check pupils' understanding and progress
- Give opportunities to pupils to revisit, correct and practice what they know to deepen and solidify their understanding
- Enable pupils to work in groups or pairs as appropriate within a structure which supports cooperation and ensures participation is equal and accountability is shared

Literacy: Everyone is a teacher of literacy at Larches High School. See Literacy policy and Development Plan

Marking Policy

Effective marking is central to effective teaching and learning. Teachers are accountable for the standards of marking, assessment and feedback in the classes that they teach. These expectations are made explicit in the “Teachers Standards.”

The standards define the minimum level of practice expected of teachers from the point of being awarded qualified teacher status and form the basis of the performance management system within Larches High School and consequently pay processes within the school.

The Teachers Standards state that a teacher must:

- Be accountable for pupils’ attainment, progress and outcomes
- Give pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourages pupils to respond to the feedback
- Demonstrate an understanding of, and take responsibility for, promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teachers specialist subject area
- Guide pupils to reflect on the progress they have made and their emerging needs
- Encourage pupils to take a responsible and conscientious attitude to their own work and study
- Know and understand how to assess the relevant subject and curriculum areas, including statutory assessment requirements
- Make use of formative and summative assessment to secure pupils’ progress
- Use relevant data to monitor progress, set targets and plan subsequent lessons

The quality of marking will be monitored as part of the schedule of Quality assurance. These will be conducted by members of SLT and the Literacy lead. Teachers will be provided with constructive feedback on their marking.

Expectations

- Pupils’ work will be marked weekly and relative to the number of times that the teacher sees the class. All marking will be dated.
- Marking will encourage the use of standard English. There will be clear evidence that Literacy is being developed over time ie errors are not repeated and should use the agreed Literacy Marking code
- Teachers comments will be sharply focused and diagnostic so that pupils are clear as to how to improve their work and what the next steps in their learning journey are. Yellow stickers should be used which outline “www” and “next”
- There should be evidence that pupils are acting on the targets they are given in subsequent work.
- Work will evidence that pupils have responded to marking and feedback - correcting errors, setting their own targets or repeating work. Pupils will be given opportunities in lessons to respond to feedback and marking. When pupils respond to teacher feedback they should do so in purple pen. Departmental designed DIRT marking sheets may be used to support feedback given.
- Highly detailed marking of every piece of work is not required.
- Marking will recognise and praise progress and good work.
- Pupils will be given opportunities for self and peer assessment. It should be clear where work has been self or peer assessed rather than teacher assessed.
- All written teacher feedback should be legible

Marking for Literacy

- Professional judgement should be applied regarding the number of errors identified and corrected
- Marking should prioritise key subject vocabulary, sentence punctuation and common errors
- To ensure clarity and consistency only the following symbols should be used:**
 - sp** for a spelling error
 - p** to indicate a punctuation error
 - C** to indicate a capital letter error
 - //** to indicate the need for a new paragraph
 - ^** to indicate that a word is missing
 - ?** and underline the sentences /phrases which do not make sense
 - Xx** to indicate factual inaccuracy
 - VF** to indicate where verbal feedback has been given on the work

Symbol	Meaning	Action by Teacher	Action by Pupil	Notes
sp	Spelling mistake	Underline the error. Write sp in the margin	Pupils write out the correct spelling at the end of the piece of work	Professional judgement and discretion is to be applied in terms of the number of spelling errors identified and corrected
p	Punctuation error	Write p in the margin Circle the error	Pupils may be asked to write out the corrected sentence	Look particularly for apostrophes, commas, full stops, colons and semi colons
C	Capital letter error	Write C in the margin Circle the error	Pupils may be asked to write out the corrected word/s	Look particularly for proper nouns, days and months and titles of work
//	New paragraph	// in the body of the work where a new paragraph is needed	Pupils should be reminded of the new point new paragraph rule	Pupils should follow the new point new paragraph rule
^	Word missing	^ in the body of the work to indicate a word is missing	Pupils may be asked to write the word they have missed	Encourage pupils to check their work
?	Sentence / phrasing does not make sense	? in the margin and underline the sentence / phrasing which does not make sense	Pupils may be asked to rewrite the sentence so that it makes sense	Encourage pupils to check their work
xx	Factual inaccuracy	Xx in the margin and underline the sentence/ phrasing	Pupils may be asked to correct the information	Encourage pupils to check their work
VF	Verbal feedback	VF in the margin to indicate when verbal feedback has been given to the pupil. Sign and date next to the symbol	Pupils should sign and date next to the symbol	Encourage pupils to note and action the feedback given

The Presentation of Work

When marking, teachers should check that the school expectations for presentation of work are being followed by pupils and that they are encouraged to take pride in their work

Handwriting must be legible. Pupils who receive extra support for handwriting should be encouraged to improve. Learning objectives, title and date of the work should be evident. The date of the work must be written at the top of the page. Work sheets should be used where necessary and should be cut to fit to the page and glued into the book.

Pupil self- editing: Pupils should be given opportunities and encouraged to self - edit and proof read their work so that they develop ownership of their work and sense of responsibility for what they have produced.

Lesson Visits

A schedule of lesson visits, which will include looking at pupil books, will be included in the school quality assurance calendar. All members of the teaching staff will be visited up to three times in an academic year. Visits will be for no more than 20 minutes unless needed. Learning walks may be scheduled throughout the academic year as deemed appropriate.

Staff are encouraged to ask colleagues, the Head teacher and SLT to visit their lessons when they want to share or highlight positive aspects of their teaching or pupil work.

Where teaching and learning falls below the expected standard a further lesson visit will be arranged in discussion with the member of staff concerned and support provided. Should improvements not be made then the school will follow Lancashire Policy as regards Capability.

Expectations

Visits will focus on

- How the lesson is planned and sequenced so that new knowledge and skills build on what has been taught before
- How the lesson reflects the context of our pupils and addresses typical gaps in the pupils' knowledge and skills
- How the lesson builds towards what the pupils need to know and be able to do to reach defined end points
- How the lesson aims to develop the wider learning experience for the pupils
- How the lesson is delivered to ensure that the content is taught in a logical progression, systematically and explicitly enough for all pupils to make progress
- How the teacher checks pupils' understanding effectively and identifies and corrects misunderstandings
- How the teacher ensures that pupils embed key concepts in their long term memory and applies them fluently
- How the teacher enables pupils to understand key concepts, presents information clearly and encourages appropriate discussion
- Will highlight strengths
- Provide opportunity for pedagogy to be discussed
- Only be discussed with the teacher and his / her line managers and the Head Teacher
- May be conducted by one or more people (maximum 2) – this may be the Head teacher, a member of SLT, external advisers. This is for training and moderation purposes.
- Will **not** be graded. Formative feedback will be given detailing strengths, areas for development and any causes for concern.
- Be arranged with teachers one day in advance of the visit. The lesson to be visited will be decided by the observer for two of the visits and will be decided by the teacher in the case of the Performance Management visit. The focus for this visit will be agreed in line with Performance Management targets

During the lesson visit

- The observer will look at pupils' work
- The observer will talk with pupils and discuss their work with them.

After the visit

- A post – lesson feedback meeting will take place ideally within two working days of the lesson and written feedback will be given
- Feedback will be honest and supportive, including both strengths and targets for further improvement and development and encourage reflective practice

Learning Walk / Drop in

These enable Senior Staff and external advisers to gain an accurate picture of day to day practice in teaching and learning across the school, a year group, a group of pupils.

They may be carried out by the SLT / middle leaders or external advisers, maximum of two people

They will in normal circumstances be for a period of ten minutes or less.

Formal written notes will not usually be taken, although written feedback may be necessary where concerns are such to trigger additional observation

Evidence gained on learning walks /drop in will be reported to the Governing Body on the everyday quality of teaching and learning at Larches High School.

Lesson Visit / Observation 2024-25	Member of staff / Observer:	Date:
Class: Year Number of Pupils:	Subject / Context	
INTENT	INFORMATION	
Are curriculum plans available on the website?		
Is planning in line with National Curriculum guidance / statutory guidance / Examination specification		
Additional comments as regards planning		
IMPLEMENTATION IN THE LESSON	INFORMATION	
Is a positive working relationship with the pupils evident?		
Are pupils engaged and listening?		
What resources and materials are being used?		
Is the presentation of the lesson helping the pupils to learn?		
Is the delivery building and supporting the development of knowledge		
Are there clear measurable objectives?		
Is there evidence via teacher delivery of pupils acquiring knowledge over time?		
Is the teacher recognising and assessing gaps? Via questioning?		
Has the teacher used the IEP's / SEN information / Pupil support plan in lesson planning and delivery?		

How are pupil gaps supported within the lesson?	
How is assessment done in the subject?	
IMPLEMENTATION PUPIL BOOKS	INFORMATION
Does the work in the books match the curriculum planning?	
Are gaps being addressed?	
Is there evidence that pupil learning is being supported – appropriate feedback / review or extension tasks?	
Are common errors and misconceptions being noted / commented on?	
Is there evidence of over learning / re learning?	
Are there opportunities for extended writing evident?	
Does pupil knowledge appear secure?	
Is there evidence of progress over time?	
Presentation of work?	
IMPLEMENTATION – PUPIL DISCUSSION	
What did you learn in the lesson visited?	
Can you remember what you learnt last week?	
Can you remember something you learned earlier in the year?	
How do the teachers help you to learn better?	
What do you like about this subject?	
Do you need anything extra to learn in this lesson?	

Strengths	Areas for Development

Sharing good practice with peers: Rationale and Protocol

At Larches High School this will involve both teachers and learning support staff. These are scheduled within the teaching and learning calendar.

The purposes of sharing good practice include:

- providing us with opportunities, both through observing and being observed in teaching and supporting learners, to reflect on and review our skills with the assistance of our colleagues
- identifying good practice, and needs which we can address, to ensure our ongoing personal and professional development
- helping us to continue to learn from each other, towards developing shared understandings of best practices in assessment, learning and teaching and learner support
- giving us continuing opportunities to observe pupils as they learn in colleagues' teaching sessions, and reflect on how we can enhance their learning or our support in our own lessons
- allowing us to gain from mutually beneficial learning experiences through the processes of observing colleagues and being observed ourselves
- helping us to look at new ideas
- identifying generic development needs, to feed into ongoing and future staff development activities.

How confidential is it?

Essentially, it's confidential between you and your observer. This process is not connected with the formal processes of appraisal or Performance Management, other than that we expect you to confirm that you have done it. That said, you may well wish to use feedback from your observer as evidence of your good practice in appraisal or Performance Management – the choice remains yours.

So what is recorded?

In effect, all that is recorded is that meeting and visit has happened in line with the quality assurance calendar and/ or as agreed. This basic information is collated ensuring that all members of teaching staff and learning support staff are engaging with the process both as observers and observed, and providing evidence of this engagement to help outside agencies or professional bodies to see how committed we are to maximising the benefits of sharing best practice with each other in school.

Information about the focus should be emailed to the Head teacher, organising Middle leaders prior to the visit and include the following information:

- Date of lesson visit
- Name of person visiting and being visited

What else?

Several useful things emerge from this process, including the following:

- Increased confidence of all involved, derived from feedback on being observed and good ideas picked up while watching others' teaching or supporting learners.

- Identification of good practice, so that it is more easily shared and built upon
- Identification of commonly experienced problems and needs, so that these can be made the basis of staff development opportunities
- The benefit of focused 'learning conversations' between observed and observers, mutually helping both parties to continue to develop professional skills relating to teaching and learning and learner support.

How exactly does it work?

Basically, there are eight steps for each observation. These guidelines are written with 'you' being the observed.

1. You choose your own peers. Normally the intention is you choose a different peer reviewer for each lesson, to optimise the sharing of experience. In selecting reviewers, you may ask colleagues from any subject / year group or from your own subject / year group
2. You decide what sort of teaching/learning/ support is going to be observed and when. If possible these should not require additional cover to be organised.
3. You meet to set the scene. You arrange a brief 'pre-meeting' with your chosen observer in advance of the lesson to be observed, to explain its context and objectives and to agree any particular focus for the observation.
4. You plan with your observer your feedback agenda. At the 'pre-meeting' you plan the date, time and duration of the observation, and you also plan ahead for a 'post-meeting' after the observation so you can get feedback, which should be constructive, focused, supportive and developmental. You choose with your observer a framework for the recording of appropriate observations for your session. An exemplar is provided.
5. You do your bit – your observation takes place. Your observer uses the agreed agenda as a basis for recording observations and suggestions during your lesson, and prepares to bring this back to hand over to you at the 'post-meeting' referred to above.
6. The two of you meet for the 'post-meeting'. This might be immediately following the observed lesson. During the feedback discussion, aspects of good practice and 2 developmental needs will be shared. It is your observer's role to assist you in the process of review and reflection with the aim of improving the quality of your teaching/ learner supporting as well as highlighting good practice for wider dissemination. Remember you may be doing (or may already have done) exactly the same for your observer – peer review is a reciprocal process throughout.
7. The two of you 'seal the deal' with your joint thoughts which should also be recorded. Remember, no-one else sees this form unless you choose to show it to them, so you can be frank and direct in your own comments about the lesson you taught or supported. This makes it easier to revisit the form in future action-planning.
8. You send in the basic data of the observation. After the 'postmeeting', you contact the Head teacher by email simply supplying the date, location and nature of the peer review visit and the name of the observer, thereby recording that the observation has taken place. You are welcome to provide any generic feedback points for dissemination more widely, and any training needs you have identified, to ensure relevant development opportunities can be provided.

So what do I gain?

Some of the benefits of the opportunity to sit in others' classes and watch what happens.

- You see colleagues doing things that you can emulate. Even very experienced observers comment that they continue to learn new things that they can take back and apply to their own teaching or learner support.
- You see other ways of going about teaching and supporting learners.
- You can feel you are supporting colleagues by watching them teach or support learners.
- You get time out to watch and reflect. For once, you don't have to say anything. You can watch, think, listen, and capture things in your notes to share later with your colleague.
- You can be a pupil for a while. It's really useful to sit being a pupil. It helps us think about how they feel in our lessons.
- You can learn from how people do things in completely different subjects do it.
- You may see things to avoid doing yourself!
- You get the luxury of leading a 'learning conversation' with your colleague about teaching and learning/ learner support. Such conversations are extremely valuable
- The process of giving feedback to colleagues on their teaching helps you become more receptive to feedback on your own teaching.
- Being an observer is the best possible preparation for getting the most out of being observed.

The pre-meeting.... preparing

The pre-meeting should take place a few days before the review visit, rather than try to squeeze it in ten minutes before the lesson itself; this gives your observer more time to tune in to the nature of the lesson, and what you're planning to gain from the observation. Just as importantly, it allows the observer to reflect on what he or she may gain from the observation, and how it may link to their own teaching or support of learners.

It is really useful for you to fill in a short pro-forma to give to your observer at the pre-meeting, to help firm up your particular agenda for the visit, and to allow the observer to know enough about the context of the session to see 'the bigger picture' surrounding the particular lesson being observed and how you practically want it to be organised.

Areas of possible focus

- How effectively you start your lesson: how clearly you spell out the particular intended learning outcomes, how well you link this to what students should already know from previous lessons.
- How you are deployed at the start of the lesson
- Questioning: for example the way you ask the class questions, the way the students respond to your questions, how readily students ask you questions, how well you respond to their questions.
- Student attention: the extent to which you seem to achieve students' attention, the length of time the students seem able to be attentive, what you do to regain their attention when it has wandered off.
- How you promote learning and support all pupils within the lesson

- Your talking: how clear your voice is, how well students can hear you at the back of the room, how long you talk at a time.
- Student activities in class: the way you brief students on activities, the balance of individual and group activities, how you de-brief activities when they have been completed
- Progress and learning taking place
- Your own use of resources
- Time management
- How effectively you round off your lesson towards the end

Preparing to observe

Many people say they get much more out of observing others teach or support learners than from being observed themselves. So when you're preparing to be an observer, it's useful to set up the observation so that you find out as much as you can about the class being taught, as well as the context of the particular session in the bigger picture. Perhaps the most important thing to remember as an observer is that your primary aim should be to give your colleague feedback on what he or she wishes, rather than provide a lecture on how you yourself would have approached the same lesson with the students who were present.

Why a post-meeting?

The main purposes of the post-meeting are as follows:

- To allow you to gain feedback from your observer
- To allow you to receive your observer's notes, and store them for your own information and use
- To allow your observer to explain things included in these notes
- To allow you to explain to your observer any things that need elaboration
- To complete, jointly, a summary record of the observation

Member of Staff:

Peer:

Date:

Lesson visited:

Context and agreed focus of visit		
Focus Area	Evidence	Feedback
Discussion Points		
Areas for Development		