



Education Policy

Policy and Procedures

Gateways School

Independent Day School for Boys and Girls

Rationale

A Gateways education gives all pupils have access to an ambitious and knowledge-rich education in a broad and balanced range of subjects.

The rigorous curriculum provides pupils with the cultural literacy to engage with challenging conversations and shifting ideas. This will be further enhanced by a programme which will develop personal, social, emotional and physical development.

Gateways School believes in developing the whole child and consequently a Gateways education encompasses a wide range of enrichment opportunities. Pupils learn and make progress whilst being prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of the next stage in their education and ultimately, adult life. Pupils are encouraged to fulfil their academic potential, develop independent learning skills and a lifelong love of learning.

Ultimately, a Gateways pupil goes out into the world as a confident and intellectually curious member of society.

Policy Aims

- To teach knowledge for its own intrinsic value.
- To educate pupils to the highest standards through the provision of linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative educational experiences and to educate pupils to ensure they acquire skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy.
- To meet the needs of each pupil through a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum that ensures pupils make rapid and sustained academic progress.
- Where pupils are below compulsory school age, to ensure that a programme of activities is provided which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills.
- To ensure that knowledge is taught for long term memory.
- To deliver a curriculum that is well sequenced to ensure a coherent narrative of cumulative learning over time.
- To guarantee that those pupils with additional learning needs receive their full entitlement in terms of a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum (with reference to the Learning Support Policy).
- To prepare pupils for their future in a rapidly changing world to communicate with confidence, make informed decisions and deal effectively with problems.

At Gateways, we believe that for all areas to operate effectively, Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Assessment and Homework must be effectively integrated and operate as one constantly renewed process. This will allow a smooth alignment and guarantee effective learning for all students via responsive teaching.

Legislation and guidance

Relevant legislation and guidance to this policy:

Reviewed: September 2025

Next review: September 2027

- The **Equality Act 2010** - promoting non-discrimination and inclusivity. Gateways School is committed to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering good relations in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. We regularly review our practices and policies to ensure they reflect our duties under the Act and promote an inclusive environment for all members of our community
- The **Education Act 2011**, setting out duties for schools. This policy reflects the principles and reforms introduced by the Education Act 2011, including curriculum autonomy, teacher standards, and the duty to provide impartial careers guidance.
- The National Curriculum for England.

Scope and Application

This policy applies to all members of the school community, particularly those staff with any element of teaching responsibility. The policy is designed to address the specific statutory obligations on the School to provide a comprehensive curriculum for all pupils in the school, which allows them to each reach their full potential and leave school fully prepared to meet the challenges of the wider world.

The Governing Body plays a strategic role in ensuring the quality of education, safeguarding, and pupil wellbeing. Governors regularly review curriculum provision, monitor academic outcomes, and evaluate the effectiveness of leadership through structured meetings and reports. They support and challenge the Senior Leadership Team to ensure continuous improvement and compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.

Gateways School maintains a clear and accessible Complaints Policy, which outlines the procedures for raising and resolving concerns. This policy is available to parents and stakeholders via the school website and upon request, in accordance with the Independent School Standards Regulations.

Gateways School ensures that all required statutory information is made available to parents, prospective parents, and other stakeholders. This includes curriculum details, academic performance, SEND provision, safeguarding arrangements, and the Complaints Policy, in line with Part 6 of the Independent School Standards.

Curriculum

The school's premises and facilities are maintained to a high standard to support the effective delivery of the curriculum. Specialist teaching spaces, including science laboratories, art studios, sports facilities, and performance areas, are designed to enhance learning and ensure accessibility for all pupils.

While Gateways School is not required to follow the National Curriculum, our provision reflects its aims by offering a broad and balanced education that promotes pupils' academic and personal development.

EYFS

In Early Years, we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and

Reviewed: September 2025

Next review: September 2027

understand that all areas are interconnected. Both Prime and Specific areas of learning are given careful consideration.

Prime areas of learning are;

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

Specific areas of learning are;

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Within each area, individual Early Learning Goals define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the child's Reception year. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities. We ensure every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.

Learning takes place through first hand experiences using a multi-sensory approach. Exploration, investigation and risk taking are developed through play with supportive and knowledgeable practitioners who extend and develop knowledge and understanding. The learning environment is organised to promote independence and enable children to initiate their own learning. Activities are relevant, imaginative, motivating, enjoyable and challenging.

The EYFS curriculum is delivered in accordance with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Planning, assessment, and provision are aligned with the framework's requirements, ensuring children receive high-quality learning experiences that promote all areas of development. Practitioners are trained in EYFS standards and regularly review provision to meet individual needs.

PREP SCHOOL

Key Stage 1 children (years 1 & 2) have a full-time curriculum of 50 30-minute lessons per week, providing teaching and learning opportunities in English, mathematics, science, humanities, computer science, art, design technology, PE, RE, music, PSHE and Spanish. The curriculum is mainly taught and organised through a thematic approach and where possible, links between subjects for each year group will be sought. These cross curricular links are planned to help children place their learning in a wider context and to give relevance to activities and tasks.

Key Stage 2 children (years 3-6) have a full-time curriculum of 55 30-minute lessons per week, providing teaching and learning opportunities in English, mathematics, science, humanities, computer science, art, design technology, PE, RE, music, PSHE, Spanish, Mandarin and drama (UKS2.) Pupils are ability set in both English and maths to

allow both stretch and challenge and support where appropriate. Specialist teachers are placed into these subjects to ensure the children receive the best possible education. Within year 6, children are taught within the high school for English, maths and science.

Throughout the Prep School, adaptation in all subjects provides pupils with work suited to their academic ability, neurodiversity and learning needs. Pupils are continually encouraged to explore different areas of the curriculum. All planning caters for pupils whose educational needs are outside the main curriculum provision and for neurodiversity. Activities to achieve the objective stated are devised with the aim of motivating and stimulating the pupils and adding to their enjoyment of education. Teachers continually monitor the curriculum, set targets and evaluate performance. The PSHE programme in Prep is reviewed annually to ensure age relevance and that it reflects current legislative requirements.

Learning support in Prep focuses on the development of literacy and/or numeracy skills. It takes place in one-to-one or small group sessions inside or outside the classroom as appropriate. Further details can be found in the Learning Support policy.

The Prep School's PSHE programme (based on Jigsaw) is reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant and reflects the current legislative requirements. Careers education in the Prep school forms part of the PSHE programme in Upper 2 (Year 5) and Lower 3 (Year 6.)

HIGH SCHOOL

Key Stage 3 is three years in duration. Boys and girls have the same opportunities and pupils are predominantly taught in the same teaching groups, except for Maths where they are taught in ability sets. Key Stage 3 is an invaluable stage in which pupils develop their knowledge and understanding in the core subjects of English, Maths and Science, while continuing to receive a broad and balanced curriculum including lessons in Music, Drama, Art, Textiles, Technology, Computing, Latin, PE, RS, Geography and History. Outdoor Education is offered as part of the PE rotation. Pupils are given a choice in Upper 3 of their modern foreign language and this language is expected to be followed until the end of key stage 4. Most commonly pupils study Spanish. However, French and Mandarin are also available, numbers permitting.

During Key Stage 3, pupils also begin to consider the subjects they will choose to specialise in for GCSE and beyond. They are provided with guidance throughout the key stage so that these choices are fully informed, with support from teachers, the careers advisor and their heads of Key Stage. Final choices for GCSE subjects are made in the Spring term of Upper 4.

Throughout Key Stage 3, pupils continue to take part in Games lessons (Upper 3 and Lower 4 are grouped together, as are Upper 4 and Lower 5) where they have the opportunity to take part in competitive sport and play sports fixtures and competitions against local schools. There is a vast Enrichment provision which includes a wider range of activities for pupils to get involved with. This programme is refreshed each term.

Key Stage 4 is two years in duration and is followed by Lower and Upper 5. The core curriculum consists of English Language, English Literature, Mathematics and Science (combined or separate sciences). In addition, students have the option to select four 'Options' subjects. Pupils are encouraged to pursue a rigorous academic profile including a broad and balanced selection of subjects and they are guided in this process by the High School Deputy Head. Pupils can select options from Art(s), Business, Computer Science, Drama, Food Technology, Geography, History, Music, P.E., R.S. and MFL. Further Maths is also offered as an enhancement for identified pupils capable of a grade 7 or above in Mathematics. Option blocks are built around pupil choices for a greater personalisation and timetabling efficiency. Key Stage 4 aims to provide a platform to sixth form and further education by ensuring students gain a depth of understanding that goes beyond the core curriculum content and prepares them fully for the next steps in their education.

SIXTH FORM

Sixth Form students' usually study three Level 3 courses from a combination of A Levels and BTEC/Cambridge National Qualification. If individual circumstances mean that students would benefit from studying four A Level courses, then this is also an option. Alternatively, some students study less than three courses where appropriate. All are offered the opportunity to pursue the Extended Project Qualification and the English-Speaking Board examination. A range of enrichment opportunities, specifically catered to their individual development are also supported via Enrichment sessions led by the Head of Sixth Form.

Where GCSE Maths and English have not been achieved, resits are compulsory and revision classes are scheduled throughout the academic year. Owing to the demands of A Level study, students are expected to achieve a minimum of Grade 6 or above in the subjects they wish to study and must have a pass grade (Grade 4) or above in English and Maths. Where these conditions are not met, decisions about next steps are made on a case-by-case basis with the best interests and potential outcomes of the pupil at heart. Progression into Upper 6 is reliant on satisfactory academic progress across Lower 6 and through demonstration of a good attitude to learning throughout the year. Where progress and attitude fall below the expected standard, students and parents will be informed immediately and action plans put in place.

With support and guidance from the High School Senior Management Team and Senior Leadership Team, Heads of Department are responsible for devising and implementing appropriate long-term plans, curriculum maps and schemes of work. They also lead their departments in following the whole school academic policies. They are also responsible for researching and selecting the most appropriate examination board specifications for the pupils in their care. In addition to the prescribed subject knowledge, they are responsible for embedding subject specific skills such as literacy, numeracy, communication and enquiry skills in schemes of work and departmental practice and also ensure there is a robust super-curriculum offer in place so that pupils can access a breadth of learning beyond the taught curriculum.

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE) and Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) are designed to reflect the overall aims and ethos of the

school and encourage respect for other people, paying regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act. They are delivered through the pastoral and tutorial programme in form time, dedicated curriculum time within PSHEE and 'drop down' events/days. This programme is enriched by visiting speakers, and high school assemblies.

Fundamental British Values – The School promotes the values of:

- Democracy
- The Rule of Law
- Individual Liberty
- Mutual Respect – tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs or those who hold none.

These values are promoted through the PSHE scheme, assemblies and where possible through subject based curriculum content.

Careers guidance is designed to be presented in an impartial manner, enabling students to make informed choices about a broad range of career options and encouraging pupils to be aspirational and fulfil their potential. The programme is led by the school Careers Advisor. Pupils across all year groups are exposed to a broad range of career opportunities and are given time to discuss potential career choices. The school hosts a biannual career fair open to Upper 4 pupils and above. Careers education is embedded in the PSHEE curriculum as well as within each subject's curriculum. Careers advice is structured to meet the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks of:

- A stable careers programme.
- Learning from career and labour market information.
- Addressing the needs of each pupil.
- Linking curriculum learning to careers.
- Encounters with employers and employees.
- Experiences of workplaces.
- Encounters with further and higher education.
- Personal Guidance.

Options interviews are held at key transition points throughout the school and involve pastoral teams and senior leaders. Upper 6 students are also given the opportunity to have a mock interview with external interviewers from industry and academia. All students receive specific guidance from the Head of Sixth Form and the Careers Advisor when applying for post-16 and post-18 options to ensure they are fully prepared and supported in their application.

Teaching and Learning

The core of any educational institution lies in the process of teaching and learning. At Gateways we aim to foster elevated standards and consistency serving as guidance

primarily designed for teachers. This guidance is rooted in the Teachers' Standards, revised in June 2021. Key aspects of effective teaching include:

- High expectations
- Strong professional relationships built on trust and mutual respect
- Planning to meet the needs of those with SEND or who have EAL
- Strong subject knowledge
- Effective behaviour management
- Variety of methodology
- Well-planned lessons which move at pace and account for prior knowledge
- Effective questioning
- Effective use of assessment and frequent opportunities for knowledge retrieval

Lessons are therefore planned to ensure:

- Pupils fulfil their academic potential, ensuring that their education has continuity and progression.
- They build upon pupils' previous experiences of learning.
- They include all pupils in a wide range of activities so that every individual has appropriate access to the whole curriculum.
- We provide excellent standards of teaching and develop creativity in all areas of the curriculum.
- Children are encouraged to become responsible, confident and considerate members of the community.
- We facilitate children's acquisition of knowledge and skills.
- promote and enable learning which is enjoyable and worthwhile.
- Acknowledge that individual pupils develop academically, emotionally, socially, physically and spiritually at different rates.
- They promote positive attitudes to learning and encourage pupils to become reflective learners.
- Intellectual curiosity, research skills and independent learning are all encouraged.

Gateways School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Safeguarding principles are embedded throughout the curriculum, pastoral care, and staff training. All teaching and non-teaching staff receive regular safeguarding updates and follow the procedures outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Safeguarding is monitored through lesson observations, curriculum audits, and pupil voice activities.

The delivery of the curriculum is supported by robust risk assessment procedures, particularly for off-site visits, practical subjects, and enrichment activities. These are conducted in accordance with the school's Risk Assessment Policy, which ensures the health, safety and welfare of pupils and staff in all learning environments.

Reviewed: September 2025

Next review: September 2027

EYFS

The EYFS curriculum is delivered in a rich, warm, inviting and age-appropriate environment. A balance of adult led, and child-initiated learning is strived for within a flexible and child centred routine. Resources, activities and provision are supported by knowledgeable practitioners and differentiated according to the needs of the individual child. Children are encouraged to think critically and creatively and are continuously observed and assessed to inform planning for future learning. A range of visitors, educational trips and themed days are incorporated into the EYFS curriculum in order to enhance learning even further.

PREP SCHOOL

In the Prep School, teaching activities are well-planned and resourced so that each child is appropriately supported and challenged, therefore allowing them to make progress. Learning environments across the Prep School are both challenging and stimulating, whilst providing a happy, caring, organised and well-resourced setting for children to learn. Informative displays, celebrating children's learning, are clearly labelled, current, eye-catching and, where appropriate, interactive.

Children's work will be marked constructively and targets set in agreement with the children. These may be short or medium term. Please refer to the Marking section later in this policy.

Achievements for both effort and attainment are celebrated verbally and through written comments on pieces of work. House points, Track-It points, ePraise rewards and weekly merit certificates are also awarded as a result of attainment or effort throughout the Prep School.

HIGH SCHOOL

Learning is a change in long-term memory and occurs when our pupils can attach new learning to prior learning.

In order to achieve this, we believe effective teaching should comprise of:

- Challenge to ensure all pupils are made to think hard. Memory is the residue of thought.
- Effective scaffolding to ensure all pupils reach the same aspirational learning aims.
- Explanation and effective instruction to ensure novice learners are supported to acquire new knowledge.
- Modelling to ensure pupils can apply their learning, whilst also transforming knowledge and facts into complex procedures.

- Rigorous and probing questioning to make our pupils think hard and to allow our teachers to check for understanding and address misconceptions.
- As part of responsive teaching, feedback must always aim to improve the pupil and further their learning. Feedback must be more work for the pupil than the teacher.
- Lessons are characterised by positive relationships and a positive climate for learning as outlined in the Gateways School Behaviour policy.

Academically Able and Super-Curricular Opportunities (STRIVE)

Stretch and challenge opportunities are planned within schemes of work to ensure that pupils who are academically able, or demonstrate significant talent in any subject area, are being challenged and encouraged to excel. This is achieved through a variety of structured opportunities, within the classroom and via homework.

Gateways School identifies academically able pupils by using:

- Quantitative data including available test data and results of in-class/teacher assessment, e.g. MidYIS, YELLIS, ALIS, CAT Scores, standardised tests
- Scholarship awards.
- Qualitative information, including staff assessment and examples of pupils' work.

However, stretch and challenge opportunities are inclusive of all pupils within school including those for whom English is an additional language and those with SEND needs.

Our Super Curricular (STRIVE programme) empowers our pupils to become deep thinkers, critical enquirers and intellectual risk-takers. STRIVE stands for Success, Talents, Resilience, Independence, Volunteering and Elevation. STRIVE is open to all pupils within the high school and includes educational trips, external competitions, guest speakers, seminars and workshops.

Where appropriate, Gateways School may take proportionate positive action to support pupils who face disadvantage or underrepresentation, in line with the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

PREP SCHOOL

Additional stretch and challenge activities, across all subjects, allow individually targeted pupils to accelerate their learning.

- Adapted and purposeful planning is in place to extend and support more challenging aspects of the curriculum.
- Enquiry based learning compliments intellectual maturity and pupils engage with subject material in depth.
- Setting is used in Key Stage 2 for English and Maths. This allows stretch and challenge for our most able pupils and additional support in place for those performing below age-related expectations.
- A selective Gifted & Talented Art programme is in place for talented artists in our Upper Junior year groups.
- On entry to high school, pupils who excel in particular areas of the curriculum are welcome to apply for a range of scholarship opportunities – academic, dance, drama, sport, music and art.

HIGH SCHOOL

Through adaptations, academically able pupils are given opportunities to explore more demanding areas of the curriculum including higher knowledge, abstract concepts, communication, thinking skills, problem solving and mathematical skills.

Stretch and challenge activities are set in class work and homework with those of defined ability encouraged to complete more complex exercises.

Workshops, public performances, school productions, joint activities with other schools to ensure that all pupils have opportunities to explore and develop creative talents.

- As well as normal school sporting activities, clubs and teams, talented sportswomen have access to city trials, regional competitions and attendance at national fixtures.
- As an independent school equality of opportunity must be maintained for all and therefore many school-based activities are open to all pupils.

Supporting children with additional needs

HIGH SCHOOL

We are committed to providing an inclusive, supportive, and nurturing learning environment where every pupil—regardless of their individual needs—can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

We recognise that pupils with additional needs may require tailored support to access the curriculum, participate fully in school life, and achieve their full potential. These needs may be cognitive, physical, sensory, emotional, behavioural, or related to communication and interaction.

In High School we adopt the following best practice principles:

Early Identification and Intervention

We proactively identify students who may require additional support through regular assessments, teacher observations, and collaboration with families.

Early intervention strategies are implemented to address needs promptly and effectively.

Inclusive Teaching and Learning

All staff are trained in adaptive teaching and create inclusive classroom environments.

Reasonable adjustments are made to teaching methods, materials, and assessments to ensure accessibility.

Personalised Support Plans

Individual Education Plans (Pupil Passports) are developed in collaboration with pupils, parents/carers, and relevant professionals.

These plans are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect progress and changing needs.

Collaboration with Families and Professionals is coordinated by the High School SENCo.

We value the insights of parents/carers and work in partnership with them to support their child's development.

We liaise with external agencies (e.g. educational psychologists, speech and language therapists, CAMHS) to ensure holistic support.

Support may include a reduced curriculum with core subject intervention provided on a short- or longer-term basis with the Learning Support Unit.

Student Voice and Empowerment

Reviewed: September 2025

Next review: September 2027

Students are encouraged to express their views and participate in decisions about their education and support.

We promote self-advocacy and independence wherever possible.

Staff Training and Development

Ongoing professional development is provided to ensure staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to support diverse needs.

Specialist staff (e.g. SENCo, learning support tutors and assistants) are available to guide and support classroom practice.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The effectiveness of support strategies is regularly monitored through data analysis, feedback, and review meetings.

We are committed to continuous improvement and adapting our provision based on evidence and best practice. The school maintains an Accessibility Plan, reviewed regularly, to ensure that the physical environment, curriculum, and information provision are accessible to all pupils, including those with disabilities.

Gateways School values the views and experiences of its pupils. Pupil voice is gathered through surveys, school council meetings, focus groups, and informal feedback. This input informs curriculum development, enrichment planning, and pastoral initiatives. Pupils are encouraged to take ownership of their learning and contribute to shaping the school environment.

High School staff meet weekly at a 'Pupil Update' meeting to proactively discuss pupil needs. These meetings alternate between Key Stage meetings led by Pastoral and Discipline Leads and High School meetings led by High School SMT.

PREP SCHOOL

It is important that our curriculum and teaching meet the needs of all pupils and that any necessary adaptations are made in order to meet any pupils within the cohort with additional needs. Some of these adaptations include:

Gateways School identifies pupils with additional needs:

- Through external reports from wider professionals (e.g. Dyslexia report)
- Through information collected from previous schools / settings
- Through observations from our Head of Learning Support, teaching and support staff
- Through anomalies within external data collected using our GL assessments.
- Through work completed by individual pupils.

Adaptations to allow all children to meet their full potential are put in place. These need to be purposeful and designed to meet the individual needs of each child, using a range of strategies, including (but not exclusive to) the following:

- Physical adaptations to support a child to remain focused and on task (e.g. Wobble cushions, fidget toys)
- Time allowed for movement breaks should this be seen as beneficial to the individual pupil
- Scaffolding and adapted resources to support the child to succeed.
- Teacher and LS intervention where necessary.
- Regular check-ins when the child is on task (if 1:1 support not needed.
- Regular consultations between the SENCO and parents where appropriate.
- Pro-active screening for dyslexia at an early age.
- Regular assessing of the child, with additional time added on where needed.
- Intervention programmes (eg. Beat Dyslexia, Speech & Language).
- Setting is used in Key Stage 2 for English and Maths. This allows the less able members of the year group to work at a pace suitable to their needs.

Prep staff meet weekly at a 'Pupil Update' meeting to discuss children's evolving needs and how we can best support each pupil both academically and pastorally.

Monitoring and Evaluation of teaching, learning and the curriculum

At Gateways we strive to ensure clarity, consistency and continuous progress throughout the school, planning teaching and learning with a view to enabling each child to seek the highest level of personal achievement. Regular systematic monitoring tracks achievement and standards. It ensures practice is improved in a constructive, rigorous and supportive manner. Therefore, we monitor and evaluate to make informed judgements about progress and change to move each area of learning, teaching and school life forward. The curriculum, teaching and learning at Gateways is monitored in the following ways:

- Evidence from lesson observations, learning walks and work scrutiny;
- Evidence from planned book/work scrutiny exercises
- Regular evaluation of the curriculum / scheme of work to ensure it is both up-to-date and meets the needs of each new cohort.
- Delivery of subject specific schemes of work;
- Regular departmental meetings where pupils are discussed and highlighted for praise or concern and appropriate action taken;
- Pupil self-evaluation;
- Subject awards presented at termly Awards Assemblies;
- Awarding of house-points, Track-It points (Reception to Lower 2) and ePraise rewards (Upper 2 to Upper 5);
- Publication of an annual calendar of assessment and reporting, appropriate to age, and adherence to that calendar;
- Progress shown through both internal and external assessments;
- Pupil and parent voice surveys;
- Results of internal assessments and external examinations.
- Departmental post-results analysis and support meetings to identify and improve value added.

The school undertakes a rigorous self-evaluation process aligned with ISI inspection criteria. Departmental reviews, lesson observations, pupil progress tracking, and stakeholder feedback inform strategic planning and professional development. The Senior Leadership Team leads termly reviews to assess impact and identify areas for development, ensuring that provision remains responsive and high-quality.

Marking & Feedback

Gateways commitment to academic improvement is shown through giving pupils timely feedback throughout their learning journey, verbally during lessons and by marking pupils' work in a meaningful manner on a regular basis. Frequent and consistent feedback on a child's work (classwork and homework) is the single most important assessment strategy available to the teacher, as demonstrated through the recent findings of the EEF (Education Endowment Foundation) and lies at the heart of outstanding teaching and effective learning. Undertaken thoughtfully and constructively, it can prove highly influential in motivating children to realise their full

potential. The marking policy aims to create a whole school approach to feedback and grading, making it easier for pupils, parents and teachers to be informed of standards and progress.

PREP SCHOOL

Where appropriate, comment only marking is used. Where possible, time is allowed during lessons for pupils to read any teacher comments and consult with the teacher for any guidance they require. Relevant marks/grades are recorded by the individual teacher and used to inform judgements and when reporting to parents. There is a common approach to marking English in all subjects, including subject-specific spellings and punctuation. Targets are set using a common symbol (see Prep Marking Guidelines)

The frequency of marking is determined by the work covered in lessons and the number of contact times a teacher has with a class across a week. All pupil work is checked for completeness and accuracy.

- Teachers are mindful of the effort pupils may have put into their work when marking it and marking never negatively impacts the appearance of the pupil's work.
- Pupils are encouraged to respond to teacher comments in purple pen, thus forming a dialogue between teachers and pupils.
- Marking incorporates the use of rewards where appropriate (e.g. house points / merit certificates.)
- Where appropriate, opportunities will be given for pupils to self-evaluate, action feedback and participate in peer assessment.
- Subject leaders will regularly review examples of marking within their subjects to ensure that the policy is being followed; opportunities to share good practice between teachers and departments are encouraged in department meetings and CPD sessions.
- Whenever possible, marking and feedback will involve the child directly. The younger the child, the more important it is that the feedback is oral and immediate.
- All teachers follow the Prep Marking Guidelines, shown in Appendix 2.

HIGH SCHOOL

Extent of marking

- Written work requiring a considered pupil response should be marked, or feedback supplied by other means, whether classwork or homework.
- Work completed electronically, for example in Teams can be, but is not required to be, marked electronically.
- Marking should be regular and be returned as soon as feasible after pupils complete the work.

- Routine notes taken, for example, by Upper 6 or Upper 5 pupils should at least be checked periodically for completion, scope and quality.
- Where appropriate, it is acceptable for marking to take place in class e.g. pupils mark their own work or peer review.
- Where standardised tasks are set and where marks obtained are used to make progress judgement, marks should be recorded in mark books, either electronic or paper, in a form that can be scrutinised (e.g. by line managers).
- Marking and feedback is monitored termly by the Heads of Department, as part of the school self-evaluation programme. This should take the form of work sampling activities and lesson observations.

Nature of marking and feedback

- With the exception of 'mock' exams, individual pieces of work should not be graded (GCSE/A-Level Grades). Grading in the form of current attainment/achievement is generated via a triangulation of evidence over time. Percentages, mark bands and raw marks are acceptable on individual tasks.
- Marked work should receive a diagnostic comment.
- Marking should incorporate the use of rewards where appropriate (See Rewards and Sanctions policy).
- There should be opportunities for pupils to self-evaluate and action feedback through dedicated improvement and reflection time (DIRT) and participating in peer assessment.

Homework

At Gateways we believe that a good, well-managed homework programme helps children and young people to develop the skills and attitudes they will need for successful lifelong learning. Homework also supports the development of independent learning skills and provides parents with an opportunity to actively participate in their children's education. Homework allocation is incremental per year group.

PREP SCHOOL

- Every year group is allocated specific homework tasks each week (see Prep Homework Allocation Guidelines in Appendix 3).
- Teachers will clearly explain the purpose of the homework to pupils. When appropriate, tasks will be available to access on Firefly.
- Homework should be managed to ensure pupils have enough time to complete it.
- If a pupil is struggling to complete homework due to extracurricular commitments, then these individual circumstances can be discussed with the teacher.

If a pupil is finding the homework challenging, they are encouraged to speak to their teacher for further guidance or support. Teachers will support the pupil to understand the homework and then allow time for completion.

- All homework is marked in accordance with the school marking policy. Subject teachers record all marks through suitable means. When homework is not completed or is late subject teachers are encouraged to speak to the pupils in the first instance and put in place any necessary support for completing homework going forward.
- Homework is in place to allow the children to consolidate their prior knowledge and extend their understanding further.

HIGH SCHOOL

Homework and independent study play an important role in the development of subject knowledge and the deepening of pupils' understanding of the curriculum. Independent learning is also integral to broadening pupils' understanding and instilling in them the skills of resilience, independence and perseverance.

We set homework that fits into one of the following three categories:

- 1) Learning, consolidating and embedding. Here, knowledge organisers, booklets and online resources used to support self-quizzing.
- 2) Reading and comprehension. Additional reading practice and access to challenging texts is essential and will be supported and checked via formative assessment.
- 3) Application and practice. Completion of work started in class and any additional task that deepen understanding and widen areas of interest.

Teachers are expected to:

- Integrate homework into their planning;
- Set tasks or activities;
- Set homework appropriate to each child;
- Explain when, what and how the work is to be done so that each child clearly understands, and
- Provide feedback for homework (verbal, written, peer marked class discussion) completed by the given deadline.
- Ensure that any work students present using ICT is their own and not copied and pasted or written using AI. Students will not be given credit for submitting work that is not their own. This should be made explicit.

Parents/carers are asked to:

Reviewed: September 2025
Next review: September 2027

- Praise the value of homework to their children;
- Provide a suitable space in their home where their children can concentrate on their homework;
- Establish a homework routine;
- Find time to work with their child or be at hand if a problem arises;
- Discuss, encourage and praise their child's efforts, and
- Contact the school if they are not sure of some aspect of the homework or if their child is experiencing difficulties in doing it.

Pupils are expected to:

- Make full use of any opportunities they are presented with;
- Tackle home tasks promptly and with a positive attitude;
- Take pride in their presentation and content, acknowledging the high personal standard expected, and
- Be organised, ensuring they look after and return books and completed tasks on the agreed dates

Firefly and Teams

All homework tasks should be published on Firefly by teachers. Homework tasks should have an explanation, and a deadline set on Firefly to enable students and parents to keep track of homework set. Due to the varying nature of homework tasks set, there is no expectation for homework to be marked digitally, or scores recorded on Firefly. There is also no expectation for resources to be uploaded to Firefly. It is expected that any resources required that are not printed or available online be shared with students via Microsoft Teams.

Appendix 1 – Curriculum Allocation

Reception & Key Stage 1

| | | |
|--|----------------------|------------|
| Reception (Y0), Transition (Y1) & Lower 1 (Y2) | Lesson length | 30 |
| | Allocation 2025-2026 | Time/ Week |
| Maths | 13 | 390 |
| English | 12 | 360 |
| Science | 4 | 150 |
| Humanities (His & Geog) | 4 | 120 |
| RS | 2 | 60 |
| Computer Science | 2 | 60 |
| Art | 2 | 60 |
| DT | 2 | 60 |
| Music | 2 | 60 |
| PE | 4 | 120 |
| Spanish | 1 | 30 |
| PSHE | 2 | 60 |
| | 50 | 1500 |

Key Stage 2 (Lower)

| | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|------------|
| Upper 1 (Y3) & Lower 2 (Y4) | Lesson length | 30 |
| | Allocation 2025-2026 | Time/ Week |
| Maths | 11 | 330 |
| English | 13 | 390 |
| Science | 4 | 150 |
| Humanities (Hist & Geog) | 4 | 120 |
| RS | 2 | 60 |
| Computer Science | 2 | 60 |
| Art | 2 | 60 |
| DT | 2 | 60 |
| Music & Choir | 3 | 90 |
| PE | 3 | 90 |
| Games | 4 | 120 |
| Spanish | 2 | 60 |
| Mandarin | 2 | 60 |
| PSHE | 2 | 60 |
| | 55 | 1650 |

Key Stage 2 (Upper)

| | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|------------|
| Upper 2 (Y5) & Lower 3 (Y6) | Lesson length | 30 |
| | Allocation 2025-2026 | Time/ Week |
| Maths | 10 | 300 |
| English | L3 – 11 / U2 – 12 | 330/360 |
| Science | L3 – 5 / U2 – 4 | 150/120 |
| Humanities (His & Geog) | 3 | 90 |
| RS | 2 | 60 |
| Computer Science | 2 | 60 |
| Art | 2 | 60 |
| DT | 2 | 60 |
| Drama | 2 | 60 |
| Music & Choir | 3 | 90 |
| PE | 3 | 90 |
| Games | 4 | 120 |
| Spanish | 2 | 60 |
| Mandarin | 2 | 60 |
| PSHE | 2 | 60 |
| | 55 | 1650 |

Upper 3 / Year 7

| | | |
|------------------|---------------|------------|
| Subject | Lesson length | 30 |
| | Allocation | Time/ Week |
| Maths | 8 | 240 |
| English | 7 | 210 |
| Biology | 2 | 60 |
| Chemistry | 2 | 60 |
| Physics | 2 | 60 |
| History | 3 | 90 |
| Geography | 3 | 90 |
| RS | 2 | 60 |
| Computer Science | 2 | 60 |
| Art/DT | 4 | 120 |
| Food/Textiles | 2 | 60 |
| Drama | 2 | 60 |
| Music | 2 | 60 |
| PE | 2 | 60 |
| Games | 4 | 120 |
| Spanish/Mandarin | 4 | 120 |
| Latin | 2 | 60 |
| PSHE | 2 | 60 |
| | 55 | 1650 |

Lower 4 / Year 8

| | | |
|-------------------|---------------|------------|
| Subject | Lesson length | 30 |
| | Allocation | Time/ Week |
| Maths | 8 | 240 |
| English | 7 | 210 |
| Biology | 2 | 60 |
| Chemistry | 2 | 60 |
| Physics | 2 | 60 |
| History | 3 | 90 |
| Geography | 3 | 90 |
| RS | 2 | 90 |
| Computer Science | 2 | 60 |
| Art/DT | 4 | 120 |
| Food/Textiles | 2 | 60 |
| Drama | 2 | 60 |
| Music | 2 | 60 |
| PE | 2 | 60 |
| Games | 4 | 120 |
| Spanish or French | 4 | 120 |
| Mandarin/Latin | 2 | 60 |
| PSHE | 2 | 60 |
| | 55 | 1650 |

Upper 4 / Year 9

| | | |
|-----------------------|---------------|------------|
| Subject | Lesson length | 30 |
| | Allocation | Time/ Week |
| Maths | 8 | 240 |
| English | 8 | 240 |
| Biology | 2 | 90 |
| Chemistry | 2 | 90 |
| Physics | 2 | 90 |
| History | 3 | 90 |
| Geography | 3 | 90 |
| RS | 3 | 90 |
| Computer Science | 2 | 60 |
| Art/DT /Food/Textiles | 5 | 150 |
| Drama | 2 | 60 |
| Music | 2 | 60 |
| PE | 2 | 60 |
| Games | 3 | 90 |
| Spanish | 4 | 120 |
| Mandarin/Latin | 2 | 60 |
| PSHE | 2 | 60 |
| | 55 | 1650 |

Lower 5 & Upper 5 / Year 10 & Year 11

| | | |
|-----------|---------------|------------|
| Subject | Lesson length | 30 |
| | Allocation | Time/ Week |
| Maths | 6 (7 in U5) | 180 |
| English | 8 | 240 |
| Biology | 4 | 120 |
| Chemistry | 4 | 120 |
| Physics | 4 | 120 |
| Option 1 | 6 | 180 |
| Option 2 | 6 | 180 |
| Option 3 | 6 | 180 |
| Option 4 | 6 | 180 |
| PE/Games | 3 (2 in U5) | 150 |
| PSHE | 2 | 60 |
| | 55 | 1650 |

NB: One option recommended to be a MFL

Sixth Form

| | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Subject | Lesson length | 30 |
| | Allocation | Time/ Week |
| Option 1 | 11 | 330 |
| Option 2 | 11 | 330 |
| Option 3 | 11 | 330 |
| Private Study | 12 | 360 |
| Games | 4 | 120 |
| Enrichment | 4 | 120 |
| Academic Skills | 2* (Autumn Term L6 only) | 60 |
| | 55 | 1650 |

A minority of academically able Sixth Formers study 4 options throughout their Sixth Form career.

Appendix 2 – Marking and Feedback Guidelines

PREP SCHOOL

Your marked work

- ✓ Please read our comments, they are for you.
- ✓ If you don't understand a comment, please ask what it means.
- ✓ If you are asked to 'come and see me,' please do so!
- ✓ If you have corrections to make, please do them **IN PURPLE** as soon as possible.
- ✓ If I ask you a question, please try to answer it.

POSITIVE PINK - your teacher will mark with a pink pen to highlight great work.

GROWING GREEN - your teacher will mark with a green pen to highlight things to work on.

Remember the following simple marking rules:

sp peice = spelling error (the spelling will be underlined and sp will be written in the margin)

 - muddled or confused section

// - start a new paragraph

/ - start a new line

? - I am unsure what you mean

 - you have discussed this with a teacher

 - target to work on

 - you have worked independently

 - you have worked with support

 - you left the lesson to attend another lesson (eg. music lesson)

 - house point awarded

• - incorrect answer

HIGH SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM

Feedback is the process of reducing the gap between what students currently know or can do and what they need to know or do to make further progress. However, students can only close this gap if they act on feedback they are given.

Below are ten principles that should be applied across all subject areas to make feedback and marking effective.

Effective Feedback Principles

The key purpose of feedback and marking is to move learning forward (“close the gap”).

Feedback should be just enough to get the pupil unstuck and to make progress (“scaffolding”).

Feedback should be more work for the student than the teacher.

Feedback should relate to the learning goals or success criteria that have been shared with the students.

Any positive feedback comments made should relate to the task, or the techniques, and not the person.

Any comments for improvement should be focused, specific and helpful, and provide a recipe for future action (“feed forward”).

Grades where appropriate, should be separated from the learning (“student engagement with feedback”).

Feedback should cause students to think.

Feedback should increase the extent to which students are owners of their own learning (“metacognition”).

Time in lessons should be made for students to work on their feedback to improve their work (“DIRT”).

Exam Wrappers

All formal assessments should involve student reflection on how they think they will do, how they think they did do, how effective their preparation was and how they will improve their learning strategies in the future. This should be achieved through an “exam wrapper”.

A “wrapper” is an activity that surrounds a pre-existing learning or assessment task and fosters students’ metacognition. The exam wrapper should be attached to the front of every formal assessment.

Once the assessment has been marked and graded, students should complete the exam wrapper sheet by reporting on the study strategies they used, analysing the errors they made and identifying new approaches as needed.

Before the next assessment, the exam wrapper sheets are reviewed by the students to enable them to make, and implement, an improved study plan.

Marking

While there’s no doubt that marking and feedback are connected, they are not the same.

Reviewed: September 2025

Next review: September 2027

Marking each student's assessments with detailed corrections, additions and feedback comments is exceptionally time consuming, and whilst there are research findings supporting the giving and receipt of feedback to support students' learning, there appears to have been little or no research specifically into the effects and impact of teachers marking students work. Marking in this way is not effective.

What is effective is reducing the "marks" teachers put on a script, whole-class feedback and student-initiated DIRT. The three elements to effective marking and feedback are as follows:

- **Feeding Back on the Task**

Firstly, students need to get feedback on what went well and what didn't go so well with regard to the subject content and skills, and also specific assessment skills (e.g. the skills required to write a timed essay or a short answer question). Giving this sort of feedback to students can be done in many different ways, and will vary from subject to subject, but must always be more work for the student than the teacher by making them do the cognitive work, and not the teacher! The use of symbols or codes when marking reduces the time spent writing on each script. By simply putting an asterisk or cross when there is an error or a tick when there is something really good and then getting the students to say why it is wrong or why it is good is so much more effective than the teacher doing this for the student.

A key to these marking codes, with the actions students have to undertake with each, should be given to students at the beginning of term. For common mistakes or misconceptions, it is much easier to make a note of them when reading the scripts and then reteach the class later. Regarding common spelling mistakes, it is more efficient make a note of them on a separate sheet whilst reading the scripts and then test all the students on them in the lesson, rather than writing on each individual script.

- **Providing the Correct Answers**

Secondly, students need to know where to go to get the correct answers to improve their work. This could be a dictionary, a mark scheme, a success criteria grid, a textbook, a video or a knowledge sheet. Common misconceptions should be re-taught to the whole class, but other errors need to be corrected by the students themselves, so that they are doing the thinking and, as a result, the learning.

- **Acting on Feedback**

Lastly, and most importantly, students need to act on the feedback given. This is when students are compelled to make improvements on their work. Use DIRT (Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time) in lessons to make sure this happens. Whilst improving work and changing mistakes, the students should also have to identify the mistake. This could be done on an exam wrapper feedback form. This focused editing could be done in test conditions to encourage the students to concentrate and allows time for a teacher to go around the class giving more personalised feedback verbally. Once the DIRT tasks have been completed the students should make a note about how they have improved their understanding. Students should also reflect on what they

can do to improve for next time. These improvements could include self-testing, completing practice questions, making detailed notes or flash cards or putting more effort into their studies, and should be written down on the exam wrapper feedback form.

Appendix 3 – Homework Allocation Guidelines

PREP SCHOOL

Each week, pupils will receive the following age-appropriate homework:

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Reception | Reading or phonics daily Alternated practical maths or English activity |
| Transition and Lower 1 | Spellings Daily reading Numbots/TTRS Learning Log |
| Upper 1 and Lower 2 | Spellings Daily Reading Numbots/TTRS Approximately 20 minutes maths homework Approximately 20 minutes English homework |
| Upper 2 and Lower 3 | Spellings Daily reading Maths homework English homework TTRS |
| Compulsory Optional | |

HIGH SCHOOL

The amount of homework set will vary between subjects. Guidance suggests that one homework task should set for 120 minutes of lesson time for each teaching group in every subject. Although this means some subjects will be setting weekly homework,

while others will set it only every two weeks, this requirement promotes balance, consistency and fairness.

In Upper 3 to Upper 4, most homework will involve either self-quizzing or tasks directly linked to curriculum knowledge. No formal timetable for homework is published as this creates inflexibility that would not benefit the learning of students. Individual teachers will set homework as appropriate, which will be checked and quality- assured by the Head of Department and overseen by Senior Leadership.

As a guide students might expect the following amount of homework. Please note that this is an average, and different weeks may be lighter or heavier.

- Upper 3: 6 sets of 30-minute homework per week
- Lower 4: 8 sets of 30-minute homework per week
- Upper 4: 8 sets of 40-minute homework per week
- Lower 5 and Upper 5: 8 sets of 40-minute homework per week. In addition, personal study (such as revision, mind maps, the creation of revision cards and so on) is expected.
- Sixth Form: Pupils should aim to spend approximately 5 hours of independent study time per subject each week. Where pupils are not set formal tasks on a particular day, it is expected that they will independently study to ensure they are consolidating their learning across all subjects taken. They should also use this time to access the Super Curriculum, enhancing and broadening their subject knowledge in the areas they enjoy and in which they may consider studying in Further Education.

In Sixth Form, pupils should also be spending time working on building their wider portfolios and will be expected to spend time contributing to school life, working on their extra-curricular activities and additional academic activities they may be enrolled in (such as the Extended Project Qualification). Time requirements for these will be dictated by the Head of Sixth Form.

High School Homework Sanctions

| | Detail | Outcome |
|---------|---|--|
| Stage 1 | Homework is not handed in at the designated time or is of inadequate quality. | Recorded on epraise as a demerit. Pupil given a revised deadline to hand and/or subject detention ahead of next lesson. |
| Stage 2 | Pupil is repeatedly missing set homework in 1 or more subject areas. | Lunchtime detention and consideration of short-term compulsory clinic attendance to support catch up. In Sixth Form students will be placed on supervised study if they are falling behind with class or homework. |
| Stage 3 | Pupil is referred more than three times to lunchtime detention for missing/inadequate homework. | Parents asked to attend a meeting to discuss how best to support their child to complete homework tasks. |