Northampton International Academy

Teaching and Learning Policy:
Striving for Excellence

July 2018
Review Date: July 2019

Vision and Aims

Academic excellence at every stage of learning

Teaching and Learning at NIA will center on pedagogical excellence within the classroom, with the learner at its very core, to allow all students to exceed expectations and make exceptional progress. In order to achieve this, all students will be provided with high quality learning experiences day in and day out. These experiences will offer all students opportunities to flourish and evolve in a competitive century in an international world. Alongside academic achievement, all students at NIA will become life-long learners who take with them skills that enhance their futures.

Outstanding Teaching and Learning at NIA

It must be remembered that outstanding teaching and learning is a collaborative process and involves all associated with NIA. For teaching and learning to be successful, there needs to be a consistency of approach. As a school, we strive to demonstrate the following:

- Teachers show deep knowledge of their subject. They identify pupils’ common misconceptions and act to ensure these are corrected.
- Teachers use questioning highly effectively and check pupils’ understanding systematically and effectively. Support is clearly directed and timely. Students who are falling behind are identified and supported.
- Lessons are planned very effectively, making maximum use of lesson time. Students are given adequate time for practice. Subject content is introduced progressively and teachers constantly demand more of pupils.
- Pupils’ behaviour is managed highly effectively. There are clear rules that are consistently enforced.
- Challenging and appropriate homework is set that is in line with school policy.
- Teachers provide incisive feedback. Pupils use this effectively to improve. They capitalise opportunities to use feedback and are eager to improve.
- Teachers are determined that pupils achieve well. They have consistently high expectations of pupils’ attitudes to learning.
- Students are curious, love challenge and are resilient to failure.
- Teachers are quick to challenge stereotypes and provide learning opportunities which reflect and value diversity.
- Parents are given clear and timely information, as well as support guidance, on their child’s progress.

Purpose of the Teaching and Learning Policy

The principle purpose of this policy is to raise the quality of teaching and learning in order to ensure all lessons are at the NIA ‘Expected Standard’ and that most are ‘Exceeding Standard’. Of equal importance is the focal purpose of ensuring a continuity and consistency of philosophy and pedagogic approach to ensure a strong and unbreakable Teaching and Learning ethos, whilst celebrating the diversity, creativity, and unique skill set of every practitioner in their spheres.
The Castle Academy and NIA Relationship
September 2018 – July 2019

It is beyond doubt that without the support, expertise, time, dedication, and care from Castle Academy, the NIA Primary phase would not exist. We are indebted to the leadership from Lorna Beard and Ruth Ryan in supporting and developing both the NIA children and staff in EYFS and Year 1.

As we move into a new academic year and a new building, the NIA Primary phase will continue to be supported this year by the systems and structures that have been embedded from Castle Academy, with a phased transition plan for bringing the whole school in line with NIA policy and procedure by September 2019. The justification for this interim decision is as follows:

- to protect workload impact that might occur from a rapid system change or from working under two teaching and learning systems.
- to secure continued strong outcomes for EYFS and KS1 under strong provision.
- to ensure pupils at NIA Primary are provided with the same routines and structures that create a sense of safety and belonging as we move into a new building.
- to protect the highly effective and strong Primary practice as NIA appoints a new Primary Phase Leader.
- to develop the leadership of NIA in their understanding of Primary systems from a point of exemplary leadership at Castle Academy.
- to provide a larger capacity for support during a time of upheaval.
- to integrate the systems in growing a learning campus within Northampton between NIA and Castle Academy.
Key Principles of Teaching and Learning at NIA

The Teaching and Learning policy at NIA is underpinned by six key principles that govern the pedagogical practice, provision and philosophy of learning experiences at classroom, whole school and community levels.

### Planning for Progress
- Lessons are planned based on developmental learning sequences with regular evaluation and learning checks.
- Evaluation and reflection as part of the planning process allows for adaptation and flexibility to ensure teaching is meeting all needs.

**Impact:** Engaged and independent learners, increased motivation of students and staff and clear progress being made each lesson. Progress is often rapid and sustained as a result of effective, astute and thoughtful planning.

### Inspirational Teaching
- Innovative use of practice, resources and action research to engage students.
- Mirrored and shared aspirations.
- Teaching to always remain on the cusp of educational research and to press forward and develop as part of a world class academic institution.
- A culture of collaboration between staff and students to share good practice.
- A focus on reflection and self evaluation.

**Impact:** Engaged students who develop a love for learning and aspirations for their own futures. Teachers develop a passion for their subjects and share their love for progress and knowledge. Creation of a competitive and world class education.

### High Challenge Classrooms
- Every lesson allows for students to explore learning beyond their age related expectations.
- The learning needs of all are not only met but given opportunities for all to stretch themselves.
- Links to real world contexts to validate learning in an international world.
- Questioning and challenging preconceived ideas and established notions.
- Skill based and conceptual challenge.

**Impact:** Students make exceptional progress and are uncapped by targets for attainment. All students are engaged and motivated through challenge and subject content becomes personalised to the needs and direction of the students. Students become inquisitive and self motivated.

### Metacognition and Self Recognition
- Promotion of autonomy and independence in every classroom at every opportunity.
- Opportunities for choice in learning experiences to select challenge and learning pathways for progress.
- Students are given responsibility and ownership of learning.
- Students are engaged in reflection of how they learn and how to improve their learning.
- Students develop resilience and grit in the face of challenge.

**Impact:** Self governed students who develop and display a growth mindset towards all aspects of life and learning. As a result, students are enabled to make greater than expected progress in all areas being empowered to evaluate their own learning.

### Formative Feedback
- A focus on formative feedback to evaluate strengths, targets for development, actions to demonstrate progress, and student engagement with feedback.
- Understanding of feedback loops to complete timely feedback with the highest impact on learning.
- Feedback always informs planning for progress and accurate assessment of attainment identify areas needing to be addressed.
- Assessment criteria, objectives and outcomes are shared with students so that they become empowered in the language of learning and success.

**Impact:** Students are confident in their learning and progress and can articulate how they can and need to improve. Feedback gives accurate assessment of attainment and learning and learning experiences become highly personalised for students.

### Engaging Environments and Ethos
- An atmosphere of mutual respect, collaboration, safety and challenge is developed.
- Students feel secure to speak and act freely and demonstrate their individuality and culture.
- Learning environments showcase positive and exemplar work, inspirational subject content, a love of learning and resources for progress.
- Learning is at the centre of all experiences in all classrooms, as well as a culture of personal development to allow all students to become global citizens and successful individuals.
- Positive behaviour management challenges negative behaviour in a constructive and restorative way.

**Impact:** Students demonstrate high self esteem, confidence and value. All students will feel safe to learn and take risks, therefore enhancing their learning, progress and personal development.
**NIA Key Principle 1**

**Planning for Progress**

- Lessons are planned based on developmental learning sequences with regular evaluation and learning checks.
- Evaluation and reflection as part of the planning process allows for adaptation and flexibility to ensure teaching is meeting all needs.

**Impact:** Engaged and independent learners, increased motivation of students and staff and clear progress being made each lesson. Progress is often rapid and sustained as a result of effective, astute and thoughtful planning.

**Inner Circles**
- Five Learning Phases for Lesson Planning

**Outer Blocks**
- Metacognitive skills associated with each phase

Lesson planning at NIA is centred around five key ‘Learning Phases’ that focus on progression.

The ‘Metacognitive Skills’ associated with each phase are key to the construction of learning activities.

**Structured Reflection**

**Activate Prior Knowledge**

**Consolidate Prior Learning**

**Review / Evaluate Progress**

**Share New Learning**

**Develop New Learning**

**Demonstrate New Learning**

**Memorisation of Strategy Guided Practice**

**Independent practice**
NIA Key Principle 2

Inspirational Teaching

- Innovative use of practice, resources and action research to engage students.
- Mirrored and shared aspirations.
- Teaching to always remain on the cusp of educational research and to press forward and develop as part of a world class academic institution.
- A culture of collaboration between staff and students to share good practice.
- A focus on reflection and self evaluation.

Impact: Engaged students who develop a love for learning and aspirations for their own futures. Teachers develop a passion for their subjects and share their love for progress and knowledge. Creation of a competitive and world class education.

At NIA, we believe an INSPIRATIONAL teacher is one who is able to be PASSIONATE about learning, and who is continually GROWING and learning themselves.

As an institution, NIA is proud to develop practitioners with focused and bespoke CPD experiences, and actively encourage individual academic research, continued postgraduate study, and the opportunity to share excellent practice.

The NIA ‘Nucleus’ Model for School Improvement

At NIA we believe that at the centre of school improvement is the development of inspirational teachers in the classroom.

‘The central and most important part of an object, movement, or group, forming the basis for its activity and growth’
NIA Key Principle 3

High Challenge Classrooms

- Every lesson allows for students to explore learning beyond their age related expectations.
- The learning needs of all are not only met but given opportunities for all to stretch themselves.
- Links to real world contexts to validate learning in an international world.
- Questioning and challenging preconceived ideas and established notions.
- Skill based and conceptual challenge.

Impact: Students make exceptional progress and are uncapped by targets for attainment. All students are engaged and motivated through challenge and subject content becomes personalised to the needs and direction of the students. Students become inquisitive and self motivated.

At NIA, we believe in cultivating classrooms that provide high challenge alongside high support. We promote stretch for all students, and encourage our students to enter a challenge zone, without creating an environment of panic or threat.

We believe in creating spaces for ‘cognitive wobble’ to allow all students to evolve their learning and independently develop thought. See James Nottingham’s ‘Learning Challenge’
NIA Key Principle 4

**Metacognition and Self Recognition**

- Promotion of autonomy and independence in every classroom at every opportunity.
- Opportunities for choice in learning experiences to select challenge and learning pathways for progress.
- Students are given responsibility and ownership of learning.
- Students are engaged in reflection of how they learn and how to improve their learning.
- Students develop resilience and grit in the face of challenge.

**Impact:** Self governed students who develop and display a growth mindset towards all aspects of life and learning. As a result, students are enabled to make greater than expected progress in all areas being empowered to evaluate their own learning.

At NIA, we underpin our approach to classroom practice with an understanding of the importance of autonomy, independence, choice, self-reflection, resilience and metacognition. At every opportunity, we model and explicit teach our students how to learn new skills, strategies and content, and how to evaluate their impact on our learning. We take pride in developing our students as independent thinkers and keen self-reflectors in evaluating their progress.

---

**METACOGNITION**

1. Planning
2. Monitoring
3. Evaluation

---

**COGNITION**

---

**METACOGNITION AND SELF-REGULATED LEARNING**

Summary of recommendations

---

**Education Endowment Foundation**

---

1. Teachers should support pupils in their development of metacognitive knowledge and skills.
2. Explicitly teach pupils metacognitive strategies, including how to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning.
3. Promote and develop metacognitive skills in the classroom.
4. Set appropriate levels of challenge to develop pupil self-regulation and metacognition.
5. Promote and develop metacognitive skills in the classroom.
6. Explicitly teach pupils how to plan and address the challenge independently.
7. Encourage the use of self-regulated learning tools.
8. Develop teacher knowledge and understanding through professional development and resources.
9. Encourage students to plan and monitor their learning.
11. Metacognitive strategies should be used as tools to support learning.
NIA Key Principle 5

Formative Feedback

- A focus on formative feedback to evaluate strengths, targets for development, actions to demonstrate progress, and student engagement with feedback.
- Understanding of feedback loops to complete timely feedback with the highest impact on learning.
- Feedback always informs planning for progress and accurate assessment of attainment identify areas needing to be addressed.
- Assessment criteria, objectives and outcomes are shared with students so that they become empowered in the language of learning and success.

Impact: Students are confident in their learning and progress and can articulate how they can and need to improve. Feedback gives accurate assessment of attainment and learning and learning experiences become highly personalised for students.

NIA Learning and Feedback Loops

Circle represents key point for in depth formative feedback.
Square represents key point for light touch formative feedback.
Triangle represents key point for summative feedback.

At NIA, we understand that feedback in all its forms are essential to the learning process. We build time for formative feedback and dedicated DIRT tasks into our learning and feedback loops, with planned opportunities to deliver meaningful and timely detailed feedback that will lead to progress at integral moments.
### NIA Key Principle 6

#### Engaging Environments and Ethos

- An atmosphere of mutual respect, collaboration, safety and challenge is developed.
- Students feel secure to speak and act freely and demonstrate their individuality and culture.
- Learning environments showcase positive and exemplar work, inspirational subject content, a love of learning and resources for progress.
- Learning is at the centre of all experiences in all classrooms, as well as a culture of personal development to allow all students to become global citizens and successful individuals.
- Positive behaviour management challenges negative behaviour in a constructive and restorative way.

**Impact:** Students demonstrate high self esteem, confidence and value. All students will feel safe to learn and take risks, therefore enhancing their learning, progress and personal development.

---

#### TEACHER-CENTERED CLASSROOM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning</th>
<th>Curriculum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Teacher-driven outcomes &amp; schedule</td>
<td>- Textbook driven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Non-collaborative</td>
<td>- Teacher selected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Shared learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Assignments & Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research</th>
<th>Student Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Limited to a source</td>
<td>- Complete individually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Identifying pre-digested knowledge</td>
<td>- Pre-determined format (e.g., essay, presentation)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Technology Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Data presentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Limited</td>
<td>- Pre-digested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Study guides</td>
<td>- Students learn, watch, read, and rate talk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

#### STUDENT-CENTERED CLASSROOM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summative</th>
<th>Teacher as Guide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>- Evaluate with rubrics &amp; checklists</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Student Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Curriculum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Learning applied to authentic</td>
<td>- Set by teachers &amp; students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Make connections to future learning goals</td>
<td>- Interdisciplinary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Collaboration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Grades to questions</td>
<td>- Work with peers, teachers, &amp; outside experts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Students complete group questions, conduct research, share findings, &amp; share findings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

At NIA, we believe that the learner is the heart of our practice and we promote the features of the ‘student-centred’ classroom. As a key driver for our excellent practice, we encourage the voice of the learner, celebrate diversity and identity, promote a personalised approach to teaching, active collaboration, and see the role of the teacher as a facilitator and guide to learning.
The quality of teaching and learning at NIA is judged against the ‘NIA Nine’: these are our formal teaching and learning qualities that are observed and measured to ascertain whether or not classroom teaching is meeting the non-negotiable ‘Expected Standard’. At NIA, we expect all teaching over time to meet the Expected Standard descriptors.

| **Progress** | Through regular learning checks, most students demonstrate that they are learning well and making good progress within and by the end of the lesson. Students can identify how to be successful in their learning. |
| **Learning Needs (Narrowing the Gap)** | Teaching is flexible and responsive to most students’ learning needs through differentiated intervention and targeted support. There is a visible impact on learning. TAs are deployed to support the learning needs of targeted individuals and groups. |
| **Questioning** | The teacher uses skilful questioning to ensure most students contribute and learn from each other. This leads to progress. Teaching shows ability to respond to misconceptions and errors in knowledge to promote progress through questioning. |
| **Literacy / Numeracy FBV / SMSC** | Teachers develop students’ reading, writing and communication, and where appropriate, numeracy, well across the curriculum. Teachers challenge stereotypes and use of derogatory language. Teachers promote equality of opportunity and diversity in teaching and learning. Teachers consistently promote fundamental British Values, and teach children how to be safe. |
| **Challenge** | Most able students are challenged and stretched with well planned activities that meet their level of need. Challenge is embraced by most able and they feel motivated and enthused by being stretched. Most able students are comfortable in attempting challenging work with positive results. |
| **Attitude and Behaviour** | Students have a positive attitude about their learning and behave appropriately. Students demonstrate high expectations for learning by actively participating in activities through a range of approaches to enthuse and motivate them. |
| **Engagement** | Students are engaged in their learning, are eager to work well and participate in learning dialogues. Students demonstrate some levels of resilience, confidence and independence. The pace of lesson promotes engagement. |
| **Feedback and Afl** | Teachers give clear feedback to students against success criteria to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Students understand how to improve and make progress towards targets based on both written and verbal feedback. Teacher uses assessment to inform future planning. |
| **Planning for Learning** | The teacher uses well developed subject knowledge to plan challenging tasks and activities. Learning objectives are clear and focused with planned opportunities to evaluate learning against success criteria. |
| **International** | The teacher includes one or more of the Global Citizen Pillars in their lesson, creating deliberate references and authentic links to the values associated with the chosen pillar. There is evidence of links to the International dimension in both short, medium and long term planning. |