Castle Donington College

Teaching & Learning Policy

Date for review: Autumn 2026

1. Aims

At Castle Donington College, we strive to provide a high standard of education for every pupil. We want learning to be engaging, challenging and inspiring. Teaching should meet the needs of all pupils. Approaches to teaching are grounded in research and an understanding of what enables pupils to know and remember more over time.

2. Roles and responsibilities

The **Governing Body** is responsible for:

- making sure college leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties;

- regularly reviewing and challenging information on the quality of education;

- making sure staff receive adequate training around teaching and learning;

- holding the principal to account for the implementation of this policy.

The current link governor with responsibility for curriculum (including teaching and learning) is Lisa Thorpe.

The **principal** is responsible for:

- implementation of this policy at the college;

- monitoring college-level information on the quality of the curriculum (including teaching and learning) and reporting it to governors;

- supporting staff with monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in the college;

- monitoring the impact of any strategies to improve teaching;

The **senior leader for teaching and learning** is responsible for:

- offering a clear vision for teaching and learning at the college;

- evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes;

- having an oversight of quality assurance information;

- ensuring that teachers have access to relevant, high quality CPD;

- supporting middle leaders to drive improvements in teaching and learning in their subject areas;

- devising specific strategies to address teaching that falls below expectation.

The current senior leader for curriculum (including teaching and learning) is Martin Elks (Assistant Principal).

The **heads of department** are responsible for:

- supporting and monitoring the quality of teaching in their department;

- providing teachers with high quality subject-specific CPD;

- reporting to the Principal and Senior Leadership Team on the quality of teaching in their department;

- utilising specific strategies to address teaching that falls below expectation.

Teachers are responsible for:

- ensuring that their curriculum knowledge is thorough and up to date;

- knowing the pupils in their classes well;

- following the agreed approaches to teaching and learning in the college;

- engaging in and learning from CPD and best practice within departments, across the college or externally.

4. The Donington Classroom

The Donington Classroom provides a framework for teaching and learning at the college for both pupils and teachers. It provides clarity of expectation without suppressing subject individuality or teacher creativity. It also allows teachers the flexibility to adapt their approaches based on the needs of the pupils in their class.

For teachers, The Donington Classroom comprises the following expectations:

- Greet pupils at the door

  Build positive relationships. Ensure calm, orderly entry and exit. Reinforce college expectations.

- Ambition for all

  Expect courtesy and positive attitudes. Pupils should work hard. Expect pupils to aim high.

- Show passion

  Engender a sense of 'awe and wonder'. Enthuse about your subject. Enrich what you teach.

- Know your pupils

  Use the approaches on pupils' passports. Use your seating plan to support those in need.

- Learning starts straight away

  Pupils complete a task to recap prior learning or link to new learning as soon as they arrive.

- Expert input (including modelling)

  Teach pupils the core concepts and vocabulary. Use 'I do, we do'. Show them what a good one looks like (WAGOLL).

- Check pupils' learning

  Question (cold calling) and/or use mini-whiteboards. Address gaps and misconceptions.

- Independent practice

  Circulate and support whilst pupils apply the learning.

For pupils, The Donington Classroom establishes the following expectations:

- Work hard

  Start tasks straight away. Try your best on everything. Take pride in the work you produce.

- Take responsibility

  Arrive on time. Bring the correct equipment. Ask for help if you need it.

- Be kind

  Follow instructions first time, every time. Listen and speak respectfully. Support each other.

Although there is no 'one size fits all' approach to lessons, there is an expectation that teachers will utilise strategies and methods taken from the 10 core [Teaching Walkthrus](#) and the EEF's [5-a-day to improve SEND outcomes](#). These are shown in appendix 1.

5. Feedback

Feedback is an essential part of the learning process for pupils. It provides them with the necessary information to help them improve their learning and work. Feedback should be regular and timely.

Formative feedback is provided during the learning process and is intended to help pupils improve 'as they go along'. Summative feedback is given at the end of sequence of lessons, unit of work or assessment and is intended to summarise a pupil's progress and achievement.

Feedback should be constructive and specific. Teachers should identify the things that, if addressed, will have the greatest impact on a pupil's learning. Feedback should be tailored to individual pupils' needs and abilities. Pupils should have sufficient time to reflect on feedback and make improvements.

Departments will use the college assessment procedures to establish summative assessment and marking arrangements that are appropriate for each individual subject. These will balance efficacy for pupils with issues of teacher workload.
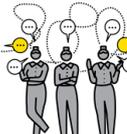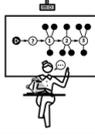
Parents/carers will be provided with regular updates on their child's progress via Go4Schools and Parents' Evenings, which may be held virtually or face to face.

6. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every two years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Governing Body.

Appendix 1

TEACHING **WALKTHRUs**

Cold calling		Check for understanding	
Modelling		Positive relationships	
Establish your expectations		Scaffolding	
Quizzing		Weekly and monthly reviews	
Guided Practice		Sequence concepts in small steps	

EEF Five-a-day principles

1 Explicit instruction
Teacher-led approaches with a focus on clear explanations, modelling and frequent checks for understanding. This is then followed by guided practice, before independent practice.

2 Cognitive and metacognitive strategies
Managing cognitive load is crucial if new content is to be transferred into students' long-term memory. Provide opportunities for students to plan, monitor and evaluate their own learning.

3 Scaffolding
When students are working on a written task, provide a supportive tool or resource such as a writing frame or a partially completed example. Aim to provide less support of this nature throughout the course of the lesson, week or term.

4 Flexible grouping
Allocate groups temporarily, based on current level of mastery. This could, for example, be a group that comes together to get some additional spelling instruction based on current need, before re-joining the main class.

5 Using technology
Technology can be used by a teacher to model worked examples; it can be used by a student to help them to learn, to practice and to record their learning. For instance, you might use a class visualiser to share students' work or to jointly rework an incorrect model.

Appendix 2 – some research-linked principles underpinning our approach

- Learning can be defined as a lasting change in pupils' memory.

- Memory comprises two elements: working memory and long-term memory.

- Working memory is where information that is being actively processed is held. Its capacity is limited, and it can become overloaded.

- Long-term memory can be considered as a store of knowledge that changes as pupils learn by integrating new ideas with existing knowledge.

- The interconnected networks of background knowledge in the long-term memory are sometimes referred to a schema.

- Developing rich, connected schemas in pupils' minds is how knowledge is created, developed and embedded.

- Teaching should help pupils build new schema, organise the information by linking it to other knowledge and reprogram parts that are incorrect.

- Teaching activities should, therefore, prioritise thinking and promote remembering. This is likely to involve adding new information to address a lack of prior knowledge, filling in gaps in incomplete prior knowledge and correcting misconceptions in incorrect prior knowledge

- By making pupils think hard, ideas will be pushed from the working memory to the long-term memory. This principle underpins the impetus around ambition, scaffolding, modelling and high-quality questioning in the Donington Classroom.

- Regular retrieval practice (review of prior knowledge) reinforces the development of the schema by actively pushing information back through the working memory.